

# MONO COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

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PO Box 347  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546  
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commdev@mono.ca.gov

PO Box 8  
Bridgeport, CA 93517  
760.932.5420, fax 932.5431  
[www.monocounty.ca.gov](http://www.monocounty.ca.gov)

## SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA

August 19, 2021 – 9:00 a.m.

### TELECONFERENCE INFORMATION

As authorized by Gov. Newsom’s Executive Orders, N-25-20 and N-29-20, the meeting will be accessible remotely by live cast with Commissioners attending from separate remote locations. There is no physical meeting location. This altered format is in observance of recent recommendations by local officials that certain precautions be taken, including social distancing, to address the threat of COVID-19.

#### Important Notice to the Public Regarding COVID-19

Based on guidance from the California Department of Public Health and the California Governor’s Office, in order to minimize the spread of the COVID-19 virus, please note the following:

#### 1. Joining via Zoom

There is no physical location of the meeting open to the public. You may participate in the Zoom Webinar, including listening to the meeting and providing public comment, by following the instructions below.

#### To join the meeting by computer

Visit: <https://monocounty.zoom.us/j/91876185087>

Or visit <https://www.zoom.us/> and click on “Join A Meeting.” **Use Zoom Meeting ID: 918 7618 5087**

To provide public comment (at appropriate times) during the meeting, press the “Raise Hand” hand button on your screen and wait to be acknowledged by the Chair or staff.

#### To join the meeting by telephone

Dial (669) 900-6833, then enter **Webinar ID: 918 7618 5087**

To provide public comment (at appropriate times) during the meeting, press \*9 to raise your hand and wait to be acknowledged by the Chair or staff.

#### 2. Viewing the Live Stream

You may also view the live stream of the meeting without the ability to comment **by visiting:**

[http://monocounty.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?publish\\_id=b9549102-19d7-4a32-acb8-10e8e407537e](http://monocounty.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?publish_id=b9549102-19d7-4a32-acb8-10e8e407537e)

*\*Agenda sequence (see note following agenda).*

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

- 2. PUBLIC COMMENT:** Opportunity to address the Planning Commission on items not on the agenda. Please refer to the Teleconference information section to determine how to make public comment for this meeting.

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DISTRICT #1  
COMMISSIONER  
Patricia Robertson

DISTRICT #2  
COMMISSIONER  
Roberta Lagomarsini

DISTRICT #3  
COMMISSIONER  
Jora Fogg

DISTRICT #4  
COMMISSIONER  
Scott Bush

DISTRICT #5  
COMMISSIONER  
Chris I. Lizza

**3. MEETING MINUTES**

- A. Review and adopt minutes of June 17, 2021 (pg 1)

**4. PUBLIC HEARING**

- A. 9:05 a.m. USE PERMIT 21-005/BJM's LLC. The proposal to use 162 Alderman Street, June Lake, for a seven-space parking storage operation of recreational vehicles, trailers, and boats during summer months only (April – October). The business will be managed by BJM's LLC, who own the property and the existing storage business on the corner of East Granite Avenue and Gull Lake Road (APN 015-104-047). The property is designated Commercial Lodging- High and is 0.23 acres. *Staff: Michael Draper* (pg 5)

**5. WORKSHOP**

No item

**6. REPORTS**

- A. Director  
B. Commissioners

**7. INFORMATIONAL**

- A. Correspondence from Mark Langer (pg 29)

**8. ADJOURN** to September 16, 2021, at 9:00 a.m.

**NOTE:** Although the Planning Commission generally strives to follow the agenda sequence, it reserves the right to take any agenda item – other than a noticed public hearing – in any order, and at any time after its meeting starts. The Planning Commission encourages public attendance and participation.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, anyone who needs special assistance to attend this meeting can contact the Commission secretary at 760-924-1804 within 48 hours prior to the meeting to ensure accessibility (see 42 USCS 12132, 28CFR 35.130).

Full agenda packets, plus associated materials distributed less than 72 hours prior to the meeting, will be available by request for public review by contacting the Community Development offices in Mammoth Lakes (760-924-1800). Agenda packets are also posted online at [www.monocounty.ca.gov / departments / community development / commissions & committees / planning commission](http://www.monocounty.ca.gov/departments/community-development/commissions-&-committees/planning-commission), on the Mono County calendar, and emailed to the distribution list. For inclusion on the e-mail distribution list, send request to [bperatt@mono.ca.gov](mailto:bperatt@mono.ca.gov).

Commissioners participate from a remote location per COVID public health precautions. Interested persons may appear before the Commission at the digital meeting to present testimony for public hearings, or prior to or at the hearing file written correspondence with the Commission secretary. Future court challenges to these items may be limited to those issues raised at the public hearing or provided in writing to the Mono County Planning Commission prior to or at the public hearing.

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## SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

June 17 2021 – 9:00 a.m.

1. **CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Chair Robertson called the meeting to order and led the pledge of allegiance.

2. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** No public comment.

### 3. MEETING MINUTES

**Motion:** Approve the minutes May 20, 2021, with corrections.

**Bush motion; Fogg second.**

**Roll-call vote – Ayes: Lizza, Fogg, Bush, Lagomarsini, Robertson. Motion passed 5-0.**

### 4. PUBLIC HEARING

A. **9:05 a.m. Variance 21-001/Martin.** The variance will reduce the required front-yard setback distance from 20' to 10' for the purpose of constructing a single-family dwelling at APN 016-123-012, North Texas Street, June Lake. The property is constrained by rocks and a cliff side. The property is designated Single-Family Residential. *Staff: Michael Draper*

- Michael Draper presented and answered questions from the Commission.
- Public Hearing opened at 10:10 a.m. The following public comments were made:
  - Applicant Ryan Lang: Current owner of the property. Aware of the concerns and understands the issues presented.
  - Speaker A: Doris and John – Please address the outstanding questions in the letter I provided that have not been answered in the staff report regarding the type of fill dirt and the power pole location.
  - Speaker B: Bill Miller – Concerned with the fire safety on North Texas Street
  - Applicant Ryan Lang: The plan is to allow for road widening if needed in the future and he is willing to assist however he can to improve the area. Will be building even if the variance is not approved.
- Public Hearing closed at 10:35. Commission deliberation:
  - Commissioner Lizza- In order to make finding “C,” need to make sure there is no roof shed into the parking area. If the variance is not approved, could have a bigger impact with the house being built on the rock.
  - Commissioner Fogg- Would like to also add that there can be no on street parking added to the conditions of approval.
  - Commissioner Bush- There are no surrounding property owners in favor of this variance which makes it hard to support.
  - Commissioner Lagomarsini- Variance is appropriate under the circumstances.
  - Condition of Approval to be added/modified:

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COMMISSIONER  
Scott Bush

DISTRICT #5  
COMMISSIONER  
Chris I. Lizza

-All Parking for uses of the property shall be provided on-site. Parking on North Texas Street is prohibited.

-Roof shall not shed snow into parking area.

-Snow must be stored on site or removed in such a manner that neighboring parcels and the road are not impacted, and snow storage within the North Texas Street road easement is prohibited.

- Chair Robertson- The added conditions help to address the neighbors' concerns. With the added conditions I am in support of the variance.

**Motion:** Make the findings that the project is exempt from CEQA as a categorical exemption under CEQA guideline 15303, direct staff to file a notice of exception and adopt the findings in the staff report and approve Variance 21-001 to allow a 10-foot setback subject to conditions of approval added to the staff report.

**Lizza motion; Lagomarsini second.**

**Roll-call vote – Ayes: Lizza, Fogg, Lagomarsini, Robertson. Nays: Bush. Motion passed 4-1.**

**B. 9:45 a.m. Use Permit 21-003/Voss.** The Use Permit would allow not-owner occupied short-term rental of the entire dwelling located at 212 Skyline Drive (APN 015-060-046). The dwelling contains three bedrooms, and the maximum number of renters is eight people. The property is designated Single-Family Residential. *Staff: Michael Draper*

- Michael Draper presented and answered questions from the Commission.
- Public Hearing opened at 11:41. The following public comments were made:
  - Applicant David Voss: The 9 parking spaces was not a request, just an example of what could be done. Requesting 4 vehicles total. The home has 2 master suites with King beds, 2 bedrooms with queen beds, and the “kids” room with twin beds. Would like the staff report to be adjusted to allow 10 people instead of 8. Would like the statement “no cars parked within the easement” be removed from the conditions of approval. The property has been used for twenty years with no issues regarding parking, privacy, and snow storage.
- Public Hearing closed at 12:10. Commission deliberation:
  - Commissioner Bush- Not supportive due to the constraints with the road situation, fire department comments, neighbor privacy issues, letters from the neighbors.
- Public Hearing re-opened at 12:20 due to public having difficulty with Zoom controls.
  - Speaker A: Barbra Miller- Does not complain but addresses the issues directly with the people who are causing the parking issues. Wants to be a good neighbor but the situation is different and new concerns have been raised.
  - Commissioner Lagomarsini- Would it be helpful to add a turn around or a mirror to assist with backing down the driveway?
  - Speaker A: Barbra Miller- Does not believe that there is enough space to add a turn around.
  - Applicant David Voss: Happy to add any mirrors that would help with the parking and safety situation.
- Public Hearing closed at 12:32. Commission deliberation continued:
  - Commissioner Lizza- Cannot make the first 3 findings due to opposition of the adjacent neighbor and easement parking issues.

- Commissioner Fogg- Has made several site visits and has major concerns regarding the emergency access and safety.
- Commissioner Lagomarsini- The fire access is a major concern.
- Commissioner Bush- Not supportive due to the constraints with the road situation, fire department comments, neighbor privacy issues, letters from the neighbors.
- Chair Robertson- Site is already being used for this type of use. STR support the local economy.

**Motion:** This project does not meet the required findings as contained in the staff report and that we deny the use permit 21-003.

**Bush motion; Fogg second.**

**Roll-call vote – Ayes: Lizza, Fogg, Bush, Lagomarsini, Robertson. Motion passed 5-0.**

## 5. INTERPRETATION

**A. Commission Interpretation 20-01 of the “permanent perimeter foundation” requirement for manufactured homes in General Plan Land Use Element §04.280.E.2.** The interpretation proposes criteria under which a permanent, complete, non-structural perimeter of siding or a similar material meets the General Plan requirements of a permanent perimeter foundation constructed of concrete or masonry for Mountain View Fire reconstruction. *Staff: Wendy Sugimura*

- Wendy Sugimura presented and answered questions from the Commission.
- Commission deliberation:
  - Commissioners generally supportive, recognizing the construction methods and styles as well as aesthetics of manufactured homes have evolved over the years.
  - The Antelope Valley RPAC’s determination that all single-wide manufactured homes are consistent with community design indicates reduced concern over aesthetics and therefore compatibility with this interpretation.
  - Commissioner Lizza raised concern that the General Plan language about a permanent perimeter foundation uses the term “shall” and that therefore an interpretation by the Commission may not be appropriate, but that perhaps the action should be taken through the Board of Supervisors. Planning and legal counsel staff will confer and take to the Board if appropriate.
  - Finding #2 modified as follows: ~~Per §04.280,~~ The interpretation would only apply to residential land use designations where residential dwellings, such as manufactured homes, are a compatible use and aesthetics are not a concern. The proposed criteria ensure visual compatibility with neighborhood character and conventional, stick-built residential units. At this time, the interpretation is recommended to be limited to MVF rebuilds on residential land use designations (excluding Rural Mobile Home), unless otherwise directed by the Commission, to specifically facilitate recovery from this disaster and because the Antelope Valley RPAC has determined single-wide manufactured homes to be generally consistent with community design, indicating aesthetics are not a concern. The Commission may request further investigation into expanding the policy countywide to promote housing stock construction in general.

**Motion:** Make the findings as recommended in the staff report as amended for Planning Commission Interpretation 21-01 of a Manufactured home “permanent perimeter foundation constructed of concrete or masonry” per General Plan Land Use Element §04.280.E.2 for

Mountain View Fire rebuilds, and direct staff to approve foundations meeting the interpretation requirements.

**Bush motion; Lagomarsini second.**

**Roll-call vote – Ayes: Fogg, Bush, Lagomarsini, Robertson. Nays: Lizza. Motion passed 4-1.**

**6. WORKSHOP**

**No item**

**7. REPORTS**

A. Director: Planners Kelly Karl is out on maternity leave and Jake Suppa has resigned from his position. April Sall will be going out on maternity leave at the end of the month. We have brought on Scott Burns part time to help. We will continue to hold office hours in Bridgeport. With the changes in restrictions the Board of Supervisors are meeting in person.

**B. Commissioners**

- Commissioner Bush: No report
- Commissioner Lagomarsini: Will not be able to attend the July meeting
- Commissioner Lizza: No report
- Chair Robertson: No report

**8. INFORMATIONAL**

**No item**

**9. ADJOURN to July 15, 2021**

# Mono County Community Development Department

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## Planning Division

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August 19, 2020

To: Mono County Planning Commission

From: Michael Draper, Planning Analyst

Re: Use Permit 21-005/BJM's LLC

### Recommendation

It is recommended the Planning Commission take the following actions:

1. Find that the project qualifies as a Categorical Exemption under CEQA guideline 15301 and instruct staff to file a Notice of Exemption;
2. Make the required findings as contained in the project staff report; and
3. Approve Use Permit 21-005 subject to Conditions of Approval.

### Background

Use Permit 21-005 would allow the use of 162 Alderman Street (APN 026-200-023), June Lake, as a seasonal parking lot (summer use only, April-October) for the purpose of storing travel trailers, boats, and recreational vehicles as a part of the owner's existing business, "BJM's Storage." The property is currently vacant except for an existing electric meter and electric hook-up panel for a recreational vehicle. Past use has included two residential mobile homes that were removed over 15 years ago.

The property is 10,018 square-foot (sf) (0.23 acres) and has the land use designation Commercial Lodging – High. It is located at the intersection of Alderman Street and South Crawford Avenue, within the June Lake Village core.

BJM's Storage is located on APN 015-104-047, East Granite Avenue, June Lake, and was permitted by Director Review 15-007 (Attachment 1). The property is designated Mixed Use and is approximately 165' from the subject project. The business continues to grow, and



Figure 1. Project site and existing BJM's Storage property highlighted.

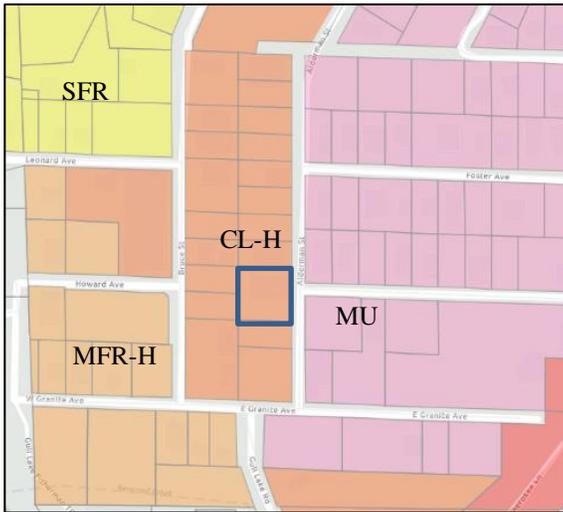


Figure 2. Surrounding Land Use Designations.

therefore the applicant would like to use their property, 162 Alderman Street, for additional storage spaces to rent. The business allows customers to store their trailers, boats, and/or recreational vehicles while traveling to and from the area. Customers may not sleep within the trailers or recreational vehicles being stored on the property.

### Discussion

162 Alderman Street (APN 026-200-023), June Lake, is undeveloped except for an existing electric meter and electric hook-up panel for a recreational vehicle and designated Commercial Lodging – High. The land use designation is intended to provide short-term commercial lodging units in close proximity to commercial/recreational centers. Parking lots and parking structures other than required off-street parking is a permitted use subject to a Use Permit. The property is

directly across from Mixed Use designated properties. The properties to the north, east, and southeast are designated Commercial Lodging - High and developed with private residential units. The property directly south and the properties directly west are undeveloped.

The applicant intends to create a total of seven (7) parking spaces; four spaces will be 36' x 12', two spaces will be 32' x 12', and one space will be 28' x 12'. Total parking coverage will be 2,832 sf, or 28.26% of the property. An asphalt apron of 2 1/2' x 36' on the property provides ingress/egress to the parking spaces and protects Alderman Street. Customers are prohibited from dwelling within recreational vehicles, boats, or trailers while parked on the property.

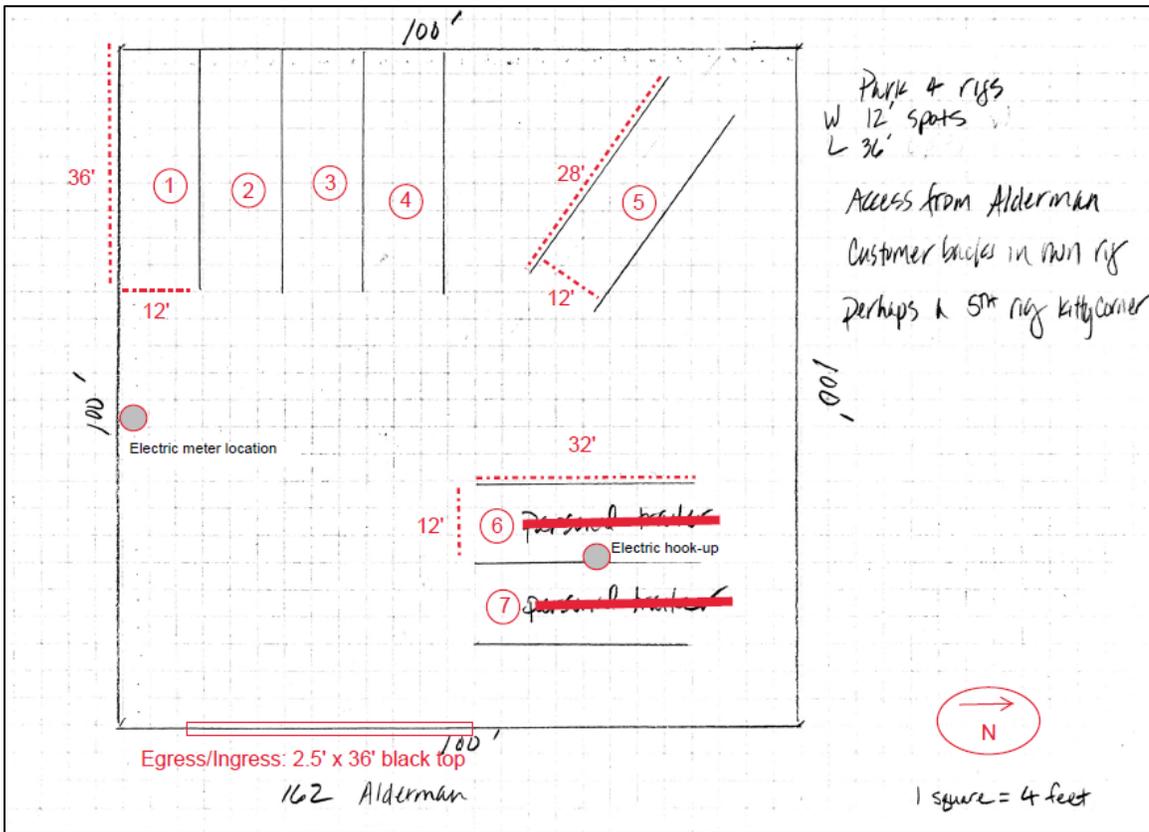


Figure 3. Site Plan

### General Plan Chapter 6, Parking.

This chapter provides standards for developing parking and applies at the time of establishment of any use. Section 06.020.A requires parking lots to be developed with paving, drainage and painting according to the specifications of the County Planning Division and Public Works departments. Lighting, wheel stops, and other parking features not specified by this chapter or other uniform regulations shall be determined by the Planning Commission.

The Public Works Department has determined that with rarely moved, stored recreational vehicles, erosion is not a significant concern. A vegetated surface or decomposed granite surface is sufficient for this project and acceptable. The project is required to provide a paved apron onto Alderman Street to prevent damage to the County road.

The method of providing parking is shown on plans and confirmed by Public Works engineer that the property is adequate for recreation vehicles and trailers to maneuver (Attachment 2). No tandem parking spaces are included in this project and the parking stall sizes exceed the minimum dimensions for communities above 7,000' elevation. The project will operate during the summer season only (April – October) and therefore snow storage is not required.

### General Plan Chapter 22, Fire Safe Regulations.

This chapter applies to any application for a Use Permit. Notice of the project was provided August 9, 2021, to the Battalion Chief of Cal Fire and the June Lake Fire Department Chief for review and to make fire protection recommendations. At the time this report is being drafted, no recommendations have been provided, however this project will be conditioned to abide by recommendations made by both Cal Fire and the June Lake Fire Department.

The project does not meet the definitions contained in this chapter of “dead-end road”, “driveway”, “one-way road”, “roads, streets, private lanes”, “roadways”, or “roadway structures”. Therefore, development standards of these are not applicable to the project. The project is required to maintain defensible space contained in Government Code section 51182.

### **Land Development Technical Advisory Committee**

LDTAC met on July 7, 2021, to accept the application for processing. A final review of the Conditions of Approval was completed at the August 16, 2021, meeting.

### **Noticing & Public Comments**

The project was noticed in a newspaper of record on August 7, 2021, (Attachment 3) and a notice was mailed to property owners within 300 feet on August 5, 2021. One comment was received as of the drafting of this staff report and is attached (Attachment 4).

The comment letter asked the following questions:

1. *Will the seven proposed parking spaces include power and/or sewer hookups, or are these only passive storage spaces?*

Staff response: Utility hook-ups are prohibited for this project.

2. *Will the entire lot be graded and/or will it require that it be covered with gravel?*

Staff response: At this time, based on the information presented to Public Works staff, a grading permit will not be required. The site’s surface may be well-established vegetation and/or decomposed granite.

3. *Will the seven individual pads be hard surfaced (Concrete or Blacktop) or gravel?*  
Staff response: Decomposed granite or vegetated surface is acceptable for the individual pads.
4. *Will trash containers and periodic pickup be required, or is provision made in the permit for such service, if deemed necessary at some point?*  
Staff response: At this time no trash containers are required for the site. Given the site is for storage only and overnight use is prohibited, no trash should be generated on site by the storage use.
5. *Will any fencing be included or required in the permit to separate this proposed area from the adjacent property owners. If so, what type of fencing is proposed or required?*  
Staff response: Fencing is not required for the project. The Planning Commission may make the determination that features not specified by the General Plan are necessary. Delineation of parking spaces and property boundaries is a requirement within the Conditions of Approval.
6. *How many driveway entrances will be required? Will they need to be paved or any hard surface required?*  
Staff response: One entrance way of asphalt is required.
7. *What provision is made for water runoff and drainage?*  
Staff response: The Public Works Department will determine if any provisions are necessary for drainage.
8. *Will the permit require weed abatement?*  
Staff response: Weed abatement is not required.
9. *Does the permit application provide for any landscaping? If not, will any landscaping be required?*  
Staff response: Landscaping is not required for the project. The Planning Commission may make the determination that features not specified by the General Plan are necessary.
10. *If used during the winter time has consideration been given to snow storage and removal?*  
Staff response: The use is for summer months only, April – October, and therefore snow storage and removal are not required.

## **CEQA Compliance**

The project qualifies for a categorical exemption under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guideline 15304, Minor Alterations of Land; “Class 4 consists of minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, wat, and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for forestry or agriculture purposes. Examples include, but are not limited to: (e) Minor temporary use of land having negligible or no permanent effects on the environment, including carnivals, sales of Christmas trees, etc.

The proposed project falls within a Class 4 exemption because the site will be used in its existing state. No new grading or construction will take place and the use will take place temporarily during summer months (April – October).

## **Use Permit Findings**

In accordance with Mono County General Plan, Chapter 32, Processing-Use Permits, the Planning Commission may issue a Use Permit after making certain findings.

Section 32.010, Required Findings:

1. *All applicable provisions of the Mono County General Plan are complied with, and the site of the proposed use is adequate in size and shape to accommodate the use and to accommodate all yards, walls and fences, parking, loading, landscaping and other required features because:*

Within the Land Use Element of the Mono County General Plan the Commercial Lodging- High land use designation lists parking lots as a use subject to a Use Permit.

The site of this property is adequate to accommodate 7 parking spaces. The parking spaces meeting General Plan Definition 2.900, "Parking space; a usable space on the building site at least 10' x 20' if over 7,000' elevation and at least 9' x 18' if covered or under 7,000' elevation. Such space shall be located off the street with adequate access to such space".

Per General Plan Section 06.020.A., "parking lots are to be developed with paving, drainage and painting according to the specifications of the county Planning Division and Public Works Department." The Public Works Department has determined that a surface of vegetation or decomposed granite with a paved access apron is adequate for this use.

Operations are limited to summer only (April-October) and therefore no snow storage is required.

2. *The site for the proposed use related to streets and highways is adequate in width and type to carry the quantity and kind of traffic generated by the proposed use because:*

The surrounding streets are adequate in width and type to carry the kind of traffic generated by a parking storage lot of seven spaces. The area streets provide access to the Gull Lake Marina and the existing BMJ Storage property, of similar uses, and other properties designated CL-H and MU. The proposed use is seasonal from April to October and will not impact snow removal on the streets.

3. *The proposed use will not be detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to property or improvements in the area on which the property is located because:*

This seasonal recreational vehicle and boat storage project is not expected to impact adjoining property owners, if conducted in accordance with Mono County General Plan standards, Mono County Code, and conditions of this Use Permit. Furthermore, the adjoining property owners were noticed of this pending application and comments received have been addressed as conditions of this Use Permit.

4. *The proposed use is consistent with the map and text of the Mono County General Plan because:*

The General Plan Land Use Designation for this property is Commercial Lodging – High (CL-H). Permitted uses subject to a Use Permit include parking lots and parking structures other than required off-street parking when abutting a commercial district, retail trade, services, and business services. The proposed use is consistent with General Plan Chapter 6, Parking and Chapter 22, Fire Safe Regulations.

The sections below from the Mono County General Plan support commercial services, such as the recreational storage use, in the community of June Lake:

MONO COUNTY LAND USE ELEMENT, Countywide Land Use Policies

*Objective D*

*Provide for commercial development to serve both residents and visitors.*

*Policy 3: Provide for adequate access and parking in commercial areas, including facilities for pedestrians, non-motorized vehicles, automobiles, public transit vehicles, and service vehicles.*

*Action 3.1: Implement policies in the Circulation Element pertaining to the provision of facilities for parking, non-motorized transportation, and transit.*

*Policy 4: Allow for the integration of small-scale commercial uses with associated residential uses, such as employee housing.*

## **MONO COUNTY LAND USE ELEMENT, June Lake 2010: June Lake Area Plan**

June Lake Area Plan, Community Development Element

*Objective G: Meet the land needs of the commercial/industrial uses*

*Objective I: Maintain the June Lake village as the Loop's commercial core by providing a wide range of commercial and residential uses in a pedestrian-oriented atmosphere.*

This staff report has been reviewed by the Community Development Director.

### Attachments:

1. Director Review 15-007/BJM Rewards.
2. Method of parking.
3. Public notices.
4. Public comment letter.

# MONO COUNTY

## Planning Division

### NOTICE OF DECISION & USE PERMIT

**USE PERMIT:** 21-005

**APPLICANT:** BMJ's LLC

**ASSESSOR PARCEL NUMBER:**

**PROJECT TITLE:** Use Permit 21-005

**PROJECT LOCATION:** 162 Alderman Street, CA 93514

#### CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

See attached Conditions of Approval

ANY AFFECTED PERSON, INCLUDING THE APPLICANT, NOT SATISFIED WITH THE DECISION OF THE COMMISSION, MAY WITHIN TEN (10) DAYS OF THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THE DECISION, SUBMIT AN APPEAL IN WRITING TO THE MONO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS.

THE APPEAL SHALL INCLUDE THE APPELLANT'S INTEREST IN THE SUBJECT PROPERTY, THE DECISION OR ACTION APPEALED, SPECIFIC REASONS WHY THE APPELLANT BELIEVES THE DECISION APPEALED SHOULD NOT BE UPHeld AND SHALL BE ACCOMPANIED BY THE APPROPRIATE FILING FEE.

**DATE OF DECISION/USE PERMIT APPROVAL:** August 19, 2020

**EFFECTIVE DATE USE PERMIT:** August 29, 2020

This Use Permit shall become null and void in the event of failure to exercise the rights of the permit within one (1) year from the date of approval unless an extension is applied for at least 60 days prior to the expiration date.

Ongoing compliance with the above conditions is mandatory. Failure to comply constitutes grounds for revocation and the institution of proceedings to enjoin the subject use.

#### MONO COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

**DATED:** August 19, 2021

- cc: X Applicant
- X Public Works
- X Building
- X Compliance

## CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

1. The operation shall provide wheel stops, or other devices to prevent trailers and/or recreational vehicles from moving.
2. Residential or overnight uses are prohibited a part of this project. The project is for storage-purposes only.
3. The operation shall provide identifiable delineation between parking spaces and of the property's boundaries.
4. The project is required to maintain defensible space consistent with Government Code section 51182 and General Plan Section 22.150.
5. The project shall comply with any requirements made by the June Lake Fire Department and Cal Fire.
6. Any lighting added to the project shall comply with the standards for downward directed and fully shielded lighting, consistent with General Plan Chapter 23, Dark Sky Regulations.
7. Future development or expansion shall meet requirements of the Mono County General Plan, Mono County Code, and project conditions.
8. Project shall comply with applicable requirements by other Mono County departments and divisions including, but not limited to, Public Works, Tax Collector, Sheriff's office, Building Division, and Environmental Health.
9. If any of these conditions are violated, this permit and all rights hereunder may be revoked in accordance with Section 32.080 of the Mono County General Plan, Land Development Regulations.
10. Revocation: The Commission may revoke the rights granted by a use permit and the property affected thereby shall be subject to all of the provisions and regulations of the Land Use Designations and Land Development Regulations applicable as of the effective date of revocation. Such revocation shall include the failure to comply with any condition contained in the use permit or the violation by the owner or tenant of any provision pertaining to the premises for which such use permit was granted. Before the Commission shall consider revocation of any permit, the Commission shall hold a public hearing thereon after giving written notice thereof to the permittee at least 10 days in advance of such hearing. The decision of the Commission may be appealed to the Board of Supervisors in accordance with Chapter 47, Appeals, and shall be accompanied by an appropriate filing fee.
11. Termination: Per section 32.060 of the Land Use Element, a use permit shall terminate and all rights granted therein shall lapse, and the property affected thereby shall be subject to all the provisions and regulations applicable to the land use designation in which such property is classified at the time of such abandonment, when any of the following occur:
  - There is a failure to commence the exercise of such rights, as determined by the Director, within two years from the date of approval thereof or as specified in the conditions. If applicable, time shall be tolled during litigation. Exercise of rights shall mean substantial construction or physical alteration of property in reliance with the terms of the use permit;
  - There is discontinuance for a continuous period of one year, as determined by the Director, of the exercise of the rights granted; and

- No extension is granted as provided in Section 32.070.
12. Extension: If there is a failure to exercise the rights of the use permit within two years (or as specified in the conditions) of the date of approval, the applicant may apply for an extension for an additional one year. Only one extension may be granted. Any request for extension shall be filed at least 60 days prior to the date of expiration and shall be accompanied by the appropriate fee. Upon receipt of the request for extension, the Planning Division shall review the application to determine the extent of review necessary and schedule it for public hearing. Conditions of approval for the use permit may be modified or expanded, including revision of the proposal, if deemed necessary. The Planning Division may also recommend that the Commission deny the request for extension.

# Mono County Community Development Department

PO Box 347  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546  
760.924.1800, 924.1801 fax  
[commdev@mono.ca.gov](mailto:commdev@mono.ca.gov)

Planning Division

PO Box 8  
Bridgeport, CA 93517  
760.932.5420, 932.5431 fax

## NOTICE OF DECISION Director Review 15-007 with Notice Seasonal vehicle storage / BJM Rewards

**APPLICANT: Kelly Marzano / BJM Rewards**

**SUBJECT PROPERTY: APN 015-104-047**

**PROPOSAL:** To permit seasonal storage for recreational vehicles and boats from the last Saturday in April to October 31, in June Lake, on property previously used for heavy equipment storage

Pursuant to the Mono County General Plan Land Use Element, conversion of operations may be permitted via a Director Review if the project is minor in nature, and exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

In accordance with Director Review Procedures, Chapter 31 and based upon the following findings, you are hereby notified that Director Review 15-007 has been:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Granted as requested.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Granted subject to the attached  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Conditions of Approval.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Denied.

### BACKGROUND

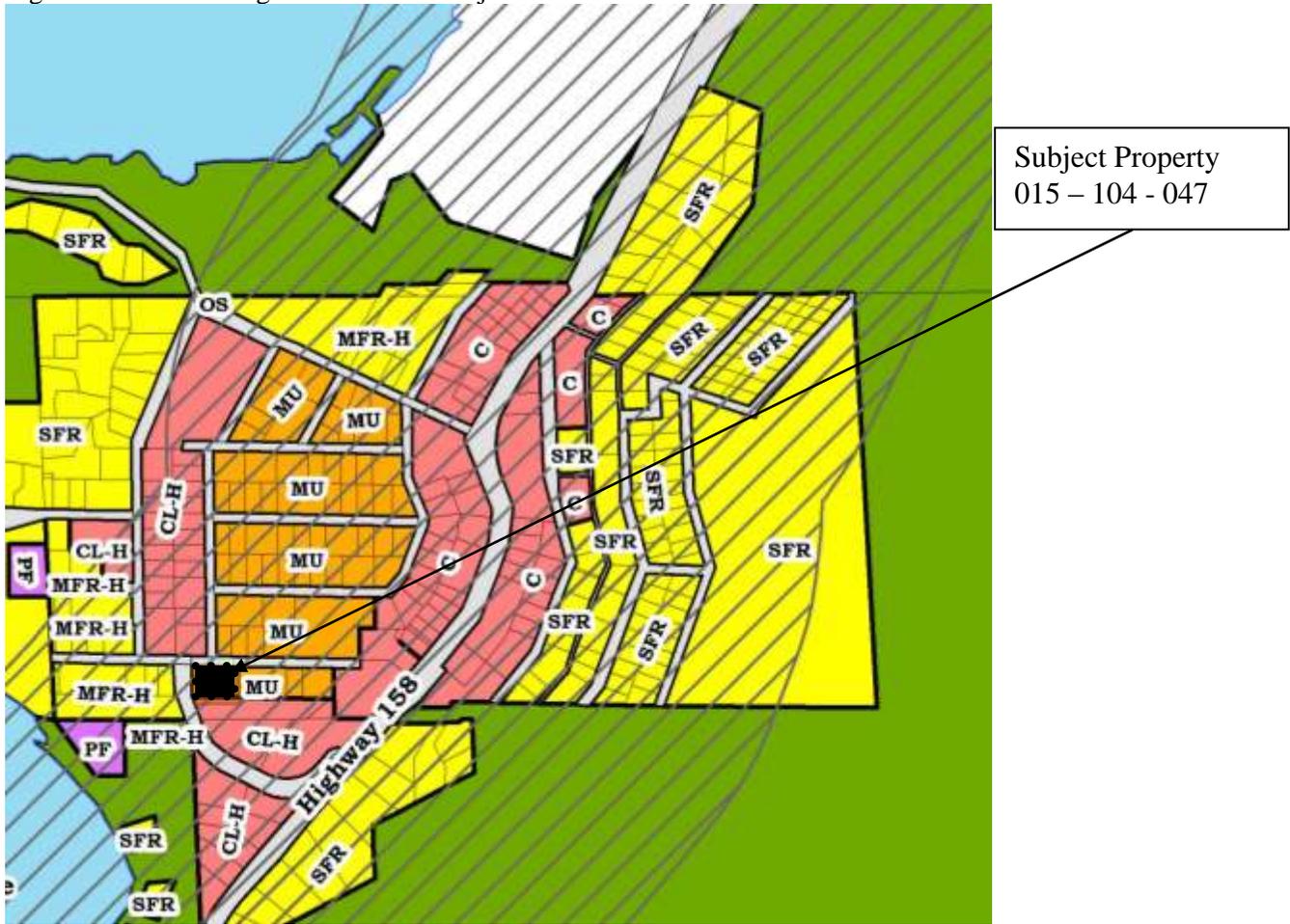
Director Review 15-007 would permit a small scale seasonal storage business for recreational vehicles and boats from May to October. The subject property is currently vacant and past use has included equipment storage for snow removal. The property is 15,000 square feet, has a Mixed Use (MU) land use designation, and is located at Gull Lake Road and East Granite Avenue in June Lake.

The business would be conducted during daylight hours from fishing opener to October 31, by the property owners. Persons wishing to store their boat or recreational vehicle would contact the owner by phone to arrange a time to meet on-site. Signage would include a small monument sign not exceeding 32 square feet to identify contact information and that parking/storage is by permit only. Vehicle repairs on the property are not proposed/permitted. The landscaping is limited to the existing tree on the corner of Gull Lake Road and East Granite Avenue, and existing fencing on abutting properties. The large open lot is needed in order to move vehicles on and off the property without obstructions.



The MU designation allows for a wide range of visitor-oriented businesses in areas with existing mixed-use development. The property was previously committed to heavy snow equipment storage over a number of years. The subject property abuts Commercial Lodging High (CL-H), Multi Family High (MF-H), and MU districts. See Figure 1.

Figure 1 – Surrounding Land Uses of Subject Parcel



## DIRECTOR REVIEW FINDINGS

Under Mono County General Plan, Chapter 31, the Community Development director may issue a Director Review permit after making all of the following findings:

1. *All applicable provisions of the Land Use Designations and Land Development Regulations are complied with, and the site of the proposed use is adequate in size and shape to accommodate the use and to accommodate all yards, walls and fences, parking, loading, landscaping and other required features.*

The project site is adequate in size and shape to accommodate the proposed small scale seasonal recreational equipment/vehicle storage. The project will comply with lot area requirements, signage limitations, Dark Sky compliant lighting, and landscaping/fencing requirements. Abandoned, dismantled, and inoperative vehicles as defined in Mono County Code 11.20.020 are not permitted on-

site; the seasonal use is subject to standards that prohibit obnoxious odors, obtrusive light and glare, and excessive noise.

2. *The site for the proposed use relates to streets and highways adequate in width and type to carry the quantity and kind of traffic generated by the proposed use.*

The June Lake Village is a recreational, residential and lodging area. The proposed use is seasonal from May to October and the existing streets and roads are adequate for the neighborhood and the proposed use of recreational vehicle and boat storage.

3. *The proposed use will not be detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to property or improvements in the area in which the property is located.*

This seasonal recreational vehicle and boat storage project is not expected to impact adjoining property owners, if conducted in accordance with Mono County General Plan standards, Mono County Code, and conditions of this Director Review permit. Furthermore, the adjoining property owners were noticed of this pending application and comments received have been addressed as conditions of this Director Review permit (see attached summary of comments).

4. *The proposed use is consistent with the map and text of this General Plan and any applicable area plan.*

As noted above, the General Plan Land Use Designation for this property is Mixed Use (MU). According to the Mono County General Plan, “the ‘MU’ designation is intended to provide for a wide range of compatible residential and commercial uses including business, professional, and retail uses....” Permitted uses subject to a Use Permit include parking lots and parking structures other than required off-street parking when abutting a commercial district, retail trade, services, and business services, and uses permitted subject to Director Review include conversion or expansion of existing operations. The proposed use is considered a less intensive use than the previous snow removal equipment storage.

5. *The improvements indicated on the development plan are consistent with all adopted standards and policies as set forth in the Land Development Regulations, this General Plan and any applicable area plan.*

The sections below from the Mono County General Plan support the allowing commercial services, such as the recreational storage use, in the community of June Lake:

#### **MONO COUNTY LAND USE ELEMENT, Countywide Land Use Policies**

##### **Objective D**

*Provide for commercial development to serve both residents and visitors.*

*Policy 3: Provide for adequate access and parking in commercial areas, including facilities for pedestrians, non-motorized vehicles, automobiles, public transit vehicles, and service vehicles.*

*Action 3.1: Implement policies in the Circulation Element pertaining to the provision of facilities for parking, non-motorized transportation, and transit.*

*Policy 4: Allow for the integration of small-scale commercial uses with associated residential uses, such as employee housing.*

*Action 4.1: Where appropriate, designate land "Mixed Use" (MU) to allow for a mix of residential and compatible commercial uses.*

## **MONO COUNTY LAND USE ELEMENT, June Lake 2010: June Lake Area Plan**

June Lake Area Plan, Community Development Element

### **Objective G**

*Meet the land needs of the commercial/industrial uses*

### **Objective I**

*Maintain the June Lake village as the Loop's commercial core by providing a wide range of commercial and residential uses in a pedestrian-oriented atmosphere.*

6. *The project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).*

CEQA Guidelines section 15302 allows for replacement of existing facilities where located on the same site and having substantially the same size, purpose and capacity, and CEQA Guidelines section 15311(b) allows for small construction or placement of minor structures accessory to (appurtenant to) existing commercial, industrial, or institutional facilities, including but not limited to: (b) Small parking lots. The proposed storage use is of a similar nature and less intense than the prior heavy equipment storage use (section 15302), and has a similar impact to that of a small parking lot, which is permitted via CEQA Guidelines section 15311.

## **CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL**

DR 15-007 is issued subject to the following conditions:

1. The business shall be conducted during daylight hours. Permitted storage is limited to operational recreational vehicles and boats from the last Saturday in April to October 31 each year; abandoned, dismantled, and inoperative vehicles as defined in Mono County Code 11.20.020 are not permitted on-site. Persons wishing to store their boat or recreational vehicle will contact the owner to arrange a time to meet on-site.
2. A single small monument sign permitted up to 32 square feet, subject to Planning Division review/approval.
3. Existing trees on East Granite Avenue and Gull Lake Road as shown in Attachment 1 shall be retained and maintained. The site is also screened by existing fencing on adjacent properties. Additional fencing along East Granite and Gull Lake Road is permitted for screening purposes. Boats and vehicles shall be stored in an organized fashion, and the property shall be properly maintained in a neat and orderly condition at all times.
4. The lot surface shall be maintained, and drainage shall be managed to ensure on-site retention. Any site grading shall comply with the Mono County grading ordinance.
5. The project shall comply with this Director Review, Mono County General Plan, and Mono County Code.
6. To prevent nuisances caused by perimeter lighting and direct glare to adjacent properties, project lighting should be kept to a minimum (perimeter lighting) and shall comply with Dark Sky regulations.
7. To prevent nuisances caused by unnecessary noise to adjacent properties, project shall comply with Mono County Noise Regulations 10.16.

**DR 15-007/BJM Rewards**

- 8. Vehicle repairs on the property are prohibited.
- 9. Additional commercial use of subject project requires review and possible amendment of this DR.
- 10. If required, an encroachment permit shall be obtained from the Public Works Department.
- 11. Applicant shall comply with any necessary conditions requested by the June Lake Fire Protection District.
- 12. Termination. A Director Review shall terminate and all rights granted therein shall lapse, and the property affected thereby shall be subject to all the provisions and regulations applicable to the land use designation in which such property is classified at the time of such abandonment, consistent with Chapter 31 of the Mono County Land Use Element.
- 13. Extension: If there is a failure to exercise the rights of the Director Review within one year of the date of approval, the applicant may apply for an extension for an additional one year. Any request for extension shall be filed at least 60 days prior to the date of expiration and shall be accompanied by the appropriate fee. Upon receipt of the request for extension, the Planning Division shall review the application to determine the extent of review necessary. Conditions of Approval for the Director Review may be modified or expanded, including revision of the proposal, if deemed necessary. The Planning Division may also deny the request for extension. Exception to this provision is permitted for those Director Reviews approved concurrently with a tentative parcel or tract map; in those cases the approval period(s) shall be the same as for the tentative map.
- 14. Revocation: The Planning Commission may revoke the rights granted by a Director Review, and the property affected thereby shall be subject to all of the provisions and regulations of the Land Use Designations and Land Development Regulations applicable as of the effective date of revocation. Such revocation shall include the failure to comply with any condition contained in the Director Review or the violation by the owner or tenant of any provision pertaining to the premises for which such Director Review was granted. Before revocation of any permit, the commission shall hold a hearing thereon after giving written notice thereof to the permittee at least 10 days in advance of such hearing. The decision of the commission may be appealed to the Board of Supervisors in accordance with Chapter 47, Appeals, and shall be accompanied by an appropriate filing fee.

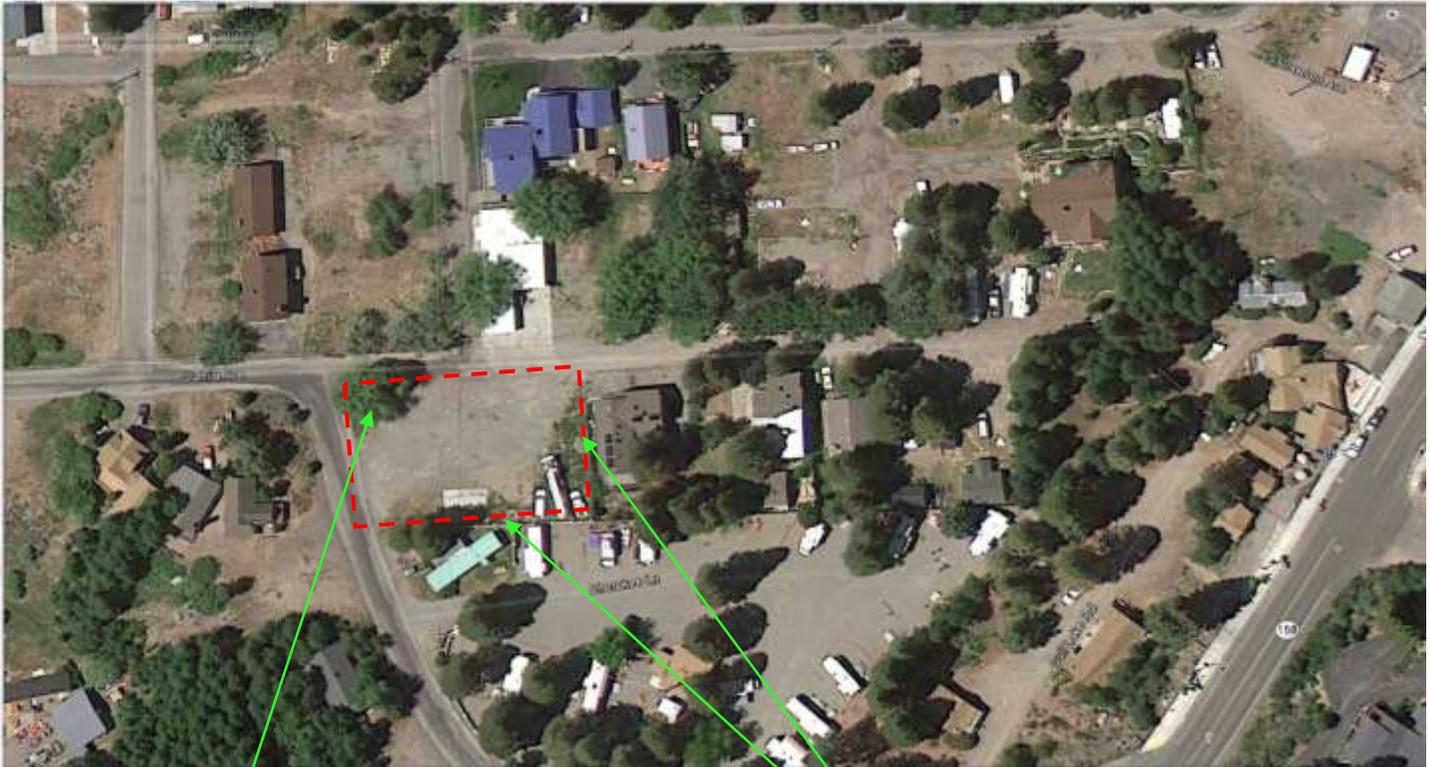
This Director Review permit shall become effective 10 days following the issuance of the Director's decision. This decision may be appealed within 10 days by filing a written notice of appeal with the secretary of the Planning Commission. If an appeal is filed, the permit will not be issued until the appeal is considered and the Planning Commission renders a decision.

PREPARED BY: Gerry Le Francois, Principal Planner      DATE OF DECISION: 8/24/2015

SIGNED:   
 Scott Burns, Director

Attachment 1 – Subject Property

**Attachment 1 – Subject Property & Landscaping / Screening Plan**



Existing landscaping

Existing fencing/screening along eastern and southern property lines

Comments from notice to adjoining property owners – DR 15-007

Hi Gerry,

I just opened the notice for a seasonal boat and recreational vehicle storage, for the property adjacent to mine on Granite Street in the June Lake Village.

I am interested to know more about the project, who owns the property, who submitted the application, and what precedent does it set if any. Noise and potentially flammable items are my main consideration, in addition to anything that might impact my view of the lakes/mountains.

Overall, the use doesn't seem that different than when Rob had heavy equipment, but there may be aspects that are more intrusive, such as time of day, frequency, personnel, etc. Is this intended for someone's personal use, or as a business? Will the items stored also be under repair or otherwise occupied?

We are headed up there for a long weekend, if you need to contact me:  
Cell

Thanks

Dear Gerry Le Francois,

I received your letter about Application 15-007.

We live at .....We were glad to see that the lot APN 015.104.047 will be a storage area for boats and recreational vehicles.

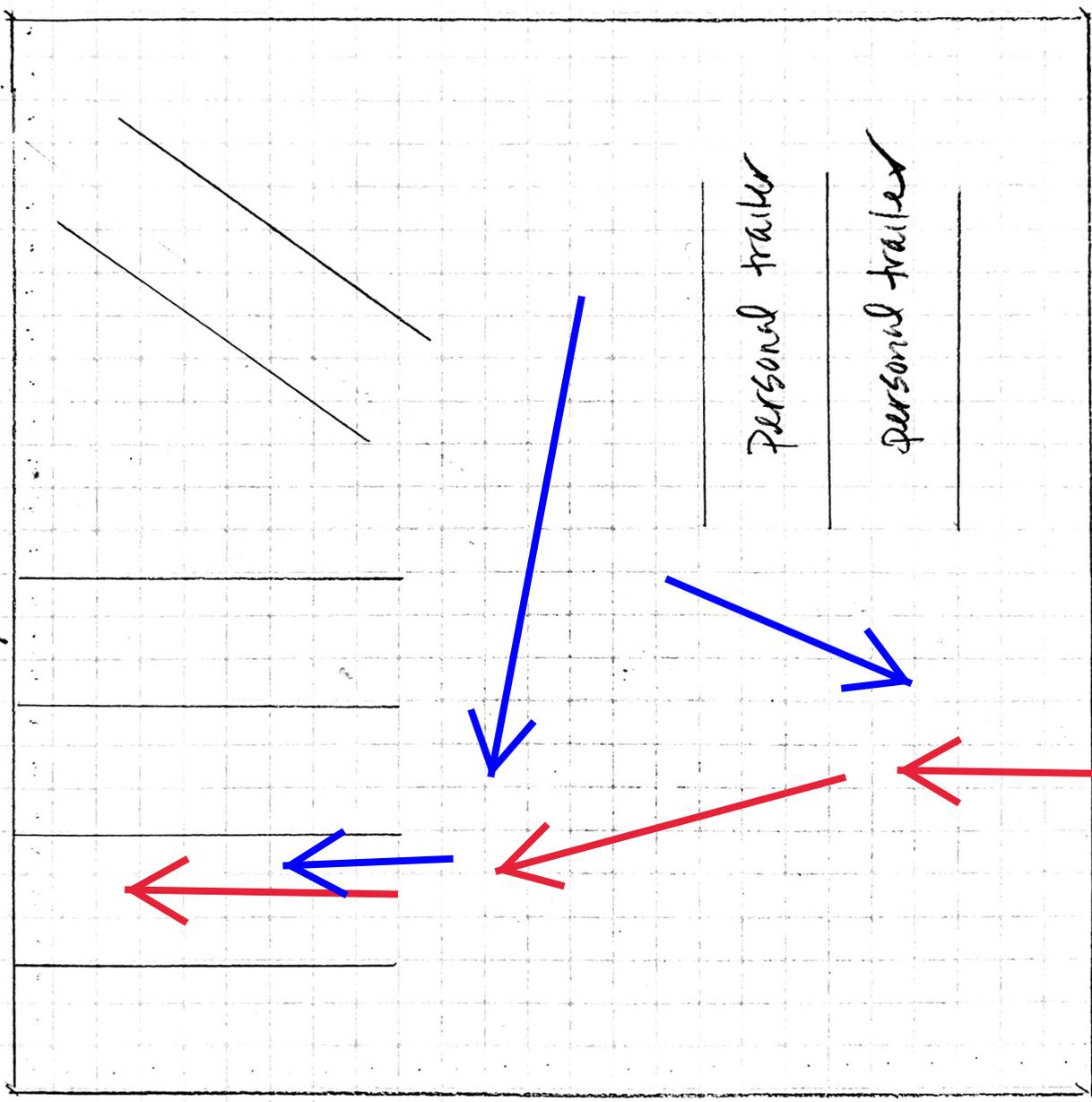
I would like to ask that this commercial use will recognize the fact that the lot is surrounded by private residences by keeping the noise down when people are sleeping.

The lot, in the recent past, was used as a ready area for all the snow removal machinery in June Lake. We were awakened at all hours by the starting and warming up of large diesel motors.

I assume this will no longer be a problem.

Thank you,

The red line represents entering the parking space and the blue line is existing.



Four 4 rigs  
W 12' spots  
L 36'

Access from Alderman

Customer backs in own rig

Perhaps a 5th rig kitty corner

100'

Personal trailer

Personal trailer

100'

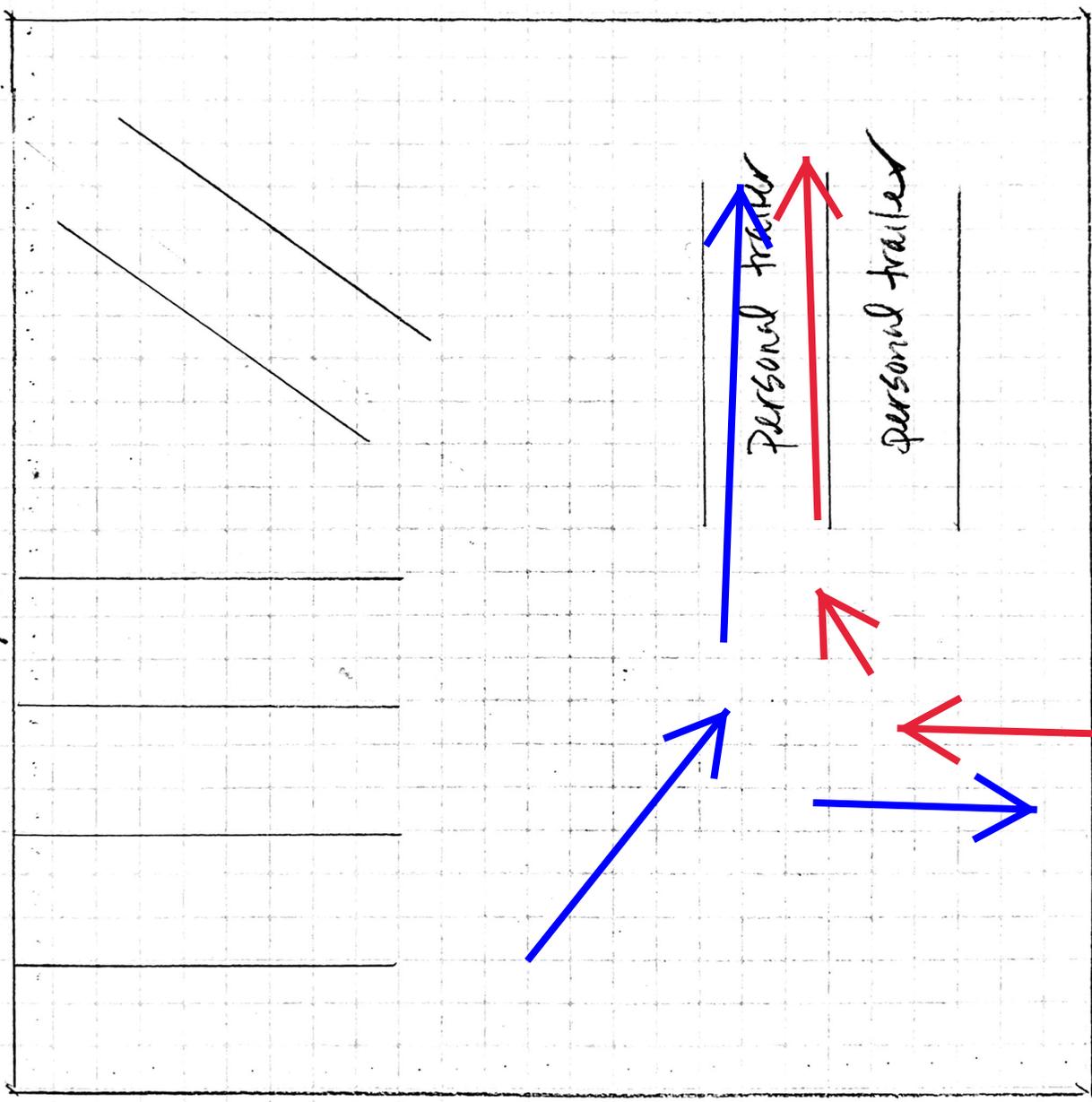
162 Alderman

1 square = 4 feet



APN 015 105 031

100'



100'

Park 4 rigs  
w 12' spots  
L 36'

Access from Alderman

Customer bikes in own rig

perhaps a 5th rig kitty corner

162 Alderman

1 square = 4 feet

# MONO COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

---

PO Box 347  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546  
760.924.1800, fax 924.1801  
commdev@mono.ca.gov

PO Box 8  
Bridgeport, CA 93517  
760.932.5420, fax 932.5431  
[www.monocounty.ca.gov](http://www.monocounty.ca.gov)

August 4, 2021

To: The Sheet

From: Heidi Willson

Re: Legal Notice for **August 7<sup>th</sup>** edition

Invoice: Heidi Willson, PO Box 347, Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

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## NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Mono County Planning Commission will conduct a public hearing at a Special Meeting on **August 19, 2021**. As authorized by Gov. Newsom's Executive Orders, N-25-20 and N-29-20, the meeting will be accessible remotely by live cast at: <https://zoom.us/join> and by telephone at: 669-900-6833 (Meeting ID# is 918 7618 5087) where members of the public shall have the right to observe and offer public comment, to consider the following: **9:05 am USE PERMIT 21-005/BJM's LLC**. The proposal is to use 162 Alderman Street, June Lake (APN 015-105-031) as a parking lot in coordination with the owner's existing business, BJM's Storage, located at the corner of East Granite Avenue and Gull Lake Road (APN 015-104-047). The site would contain seven parking spaces for boats, trailers, and/or recreational vehicle storage. In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act, a Notice of Exemption will be filed. Project materials are available for public review by contacting Michael Draper at (760) 924-1805 or [mdraper@mono.ca.gov](mailto:mdraper@mono.ca.gov). Hard copies are available for the cost of reproduction. INTERESTED PERSONS are strongly encouraged to attend the live cast meeting by phone or online, and to submit comments by **8:00 am on Thursday, August 19** to the Secretary of the Planning Commission, PO Box 347, Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546 to ensure timely receipt, by email at [cddcomments@mono.ca.gov](mailto:cddcomments@mono.ca.gov), or via the live cast meeting (technology permitting). If you challenge the proposed action(s) in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to Secretary to the Planning Commission at, or prior to, the public hearing.

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TS #2021-0120

# Mono County Community Development Department

P.O. Box 347  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546  
(760) 924-1800, fax 924-1801  
commdev@mono.ca.gov

## Planning Division

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For additional information or questions, please contact the Mono County Planning Division:

Michael Draper, Planning Analyst  
P.O. Box 347  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546  
(760) 924-1805, [mdraper@mono.ca.gov](mailto:mdraper@mono.ca.gov)



Project location: 162 Alderman Street

## Michael Draper

---

**From:** Mark Hoppe <mark@hoppe.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 9, 2021 4:25 PM  
**To:** Michael Draper  
**Cc:** Jane Hoppe  
**Subject:** Notice of Public Hearing - August 19th: USE PERMIT 21-005BJM's LLC

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

You don't often get email from mark@hoppe.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

### [EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Mr. Michael Draper,

Re.: USE PERMIT 21-005BJM'S LLC

I received a notice by mail today of the public hearing on the above referenced Use permit on August 19<sup>th</sup>

We are the owners of a 50' x 100" vacant lot on Bruce street that backs to the two lots for the project location: 162 Alderman.

Is there additional material with regard to this permit application that can be sent to me as an attachment by e-mail? If so, could you send me all applicable information.

I plan to attend the public hearing remotely on August 19<sup>th</sup>, but would like available information prior to this hearing.

Some of my questions are:

1. Will the seven proposed parking spaces include power and/or sewer hookups, or are these only passive storage spaces?
2. Will the entire lot be graded and/or will it require that it be covered with gravel?
3. Will the seven individual pads be hard surfaced (Concrete or Blacktop) or gravel?
4. Will trash containers and periodic pickup be required, or is provision made in the permit for such service, if deemed necessary at some point?
5. Will any fencing be included or required in the permit to separate this proposed area from the adjacent property owners. If so, what type of fencing is proposed or required?
6. How many driveway entrances will be required? Will they need to be paved or any hard surface required?
7. What provision is made for water runoff and drainage?
8. Will the permit require weed abatement?
9. Does the permit application provide for any landscaping? If not, will any landscaping be required?
10. If used during the winter time has consideration been given to snow storage and removal?

Sincerely,

Mark Hoppe  
 e-mail: [Mar@Hoppe.net](mailto:Mar@Hoppe.net)  
 Cell phone: 760-815-6325

Hoppe, Mark a. & jane .. Trustees  
924 Elmview Drive  
Encinitas, CA 92024

**From:** [Lynn or Mark](#)  
**To:** [patricia@mammothlakeshousing.org](mailto:patricia@mammothlakeshousing.org); [Roberta Lagomarsini](#); [Jora Fogg](#); [J. Scott Bush](#); [Chris Lizza](#)  
**Cc:** [John Peters](#); [Wendy Sugimura](#)  
**Subject:** Article on the under grounding of utility lines in today's SF Chronicle  
**Date:** Thursday, July 22, 2021 9:41:33 AM

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**[EXTERNAL EMAIL]**

Dear Commissioners,

Attached is a front page article that appeared in today's SF Chron concerning PG&E plans to under-ground power lines. It appears that overhead lines might be responsible for yet another disastrous fire, this time the Dixie Fire to our north. Additionally the on going Tamarack Fire has resulted in regional Liberty power disruptions due to damage to their overhead infrastructure. All this points to the need to underground all power lines; allowing exemptions in light of modern fire danger is irresponsible and short sighted. I believe the county should be at the forefront of a drive to underground all local utilities and urge you to do what you can to see that this problem is addressed.

Sincerely,

Mark Langner  
 Coleville

**PG&E will bury some power lines  
 Utility hopes to put 10,000 miles' worth underground to cut fire risk**

*By J.D. Morris*

Noah Berger / Associated Press

Pacific Gas and Electric Co. said Wednesday that it wants to bury 10,000 miles of its power lines in the coming years, hoping that such a farreaching and expensive effort will finally turn the company's disastrous track record around. Patti Poppe, CEO of the PG&E Corp. parent company, announced the plan at a news conference in Chico, the largest city in fire-weary Butte County, where residents are anxiously tracking the stubborn Dixie Fire burning in the Sierra Nevada.

PG&E's equipment may be responsible for that blaze, though officials are still investigating the cause. The company said Sunday that one of its employees found two blown fuses and what appeared to be a healthy tree that had fallen on a power line near where the 85,000-acre fire started last week. If state investigators conclude PG&E was indeed responsible, it would add to a long list of major fires blamed on the company's electric equipment, which has caused catastrophes that over the past several years have killed dozens of people, incinerated thousands of homes, pushed the company into bankruptcy and led it to plead guilty to 84 felony counts of involuntary manslaughter.

Poppe said PG&E leaders had originally planned to announce the undergrounding goal "in a couple months, when we had a little more meat on the bones." But executives decided "we couldn't wait, particularly given the proximity to the Dixie Fire, and the emotional toll it has on all of us."

"We need you to know that we're working night and day to solve this incredible problem," she added. The company will focus first on burying power lines in its most fireprone areas, Poppe said.

It's a major shift for PG&E, which for years resisted calls to drastically expand the number of wires placed

underground as its aging overhead electric equipment repeatedly sparked major wildfires. In the past, company leaders said the costs of burying power lines on a massive scale were too high. Now, executives say they've found ways to make the work more financially feasible — and they see it as necessary, given California's dire wildfire conditions worsened by climate change.

Poppe told reporters on a later conference call that the company's new underground power line initiative could cost \$15 billion to \$20 billion. "In my mind, we cannot put a price on the risk reduction and the safety of our system," she said. Some of PG&E's staunchest critics remain skeptical of the company, even while acknowledging the benefits of putting more power lines underground. "I think it's great, but they should have started 10 years ago," said Jamie Court, president of Consumer Watchdog. He said he wanted PG&E to commit to using no ratepayer money for the project. "This is basically another shuck-and-jive move to divert attention from the fact that they may have sparked the Dixie Fire," Court said.

PG&E has more than 100,000 miles of power lines traversing its vast service area, which stretches from Eureka to Bakersfield. About 27,000 miles of PG&E power lines are now buried underground, but most of them aren't located in high-threat fire zones. The company says it has more than 25,000 miles of overhead distribution lines in the riskiest fire danger areas.

Poppe, who started as CEO in January, told The Chronicle last month that the company has learned it can reduce the price tag drastically when doing underground work on a systemic scale. That revelation came in the Butte County town of Paradise, which was almost entirely destroyed by the 2018 Camp Fire sparked by PG&E electric equipment. The company is now burying all of the town's distribution lines as it rebuilds from the deadliest wildfire in California history, which killed more than 80 people.

PG&E had also planned to bury at least part of the power line that may have caused the Dixie Fire — but not the sloped section where the fire started, said Adam Wright, the company's chief operating officer. Wright told reporters that the section of the line the company wanted to put underground was where the fire spread, not where it started.

At the Chico news conference, Poppe talked more about how PG&E responded to the damaged equipment near the start of the Dixie Fire. About nine hours passed from when an employee first spotted, from afar, a blown fuse on a PG&E power line and when he reached the site, according to a company regulatory filing. Poppe said that when the worker finally reached the hilly scene, he saw that a 70-foot pine tree had fallen on electric wires and a small fire was burning on the ground. The tree appeared to be healthy and had been standing 40 feet away from the power equipment, Poppe said. She said the employee called for help and personally tried to extinguish the fire, making multiple trips from the top of an "extreme" slope, where his truck was parked. Poppe visited the area in question on Tuesday, driving the route her employee took so she could see what he saw. "All I can say is that our co-worker's actions that day were nothing short of heroic," Poppe said.

Butte County District Attorney Mike Ramsey, who last year secured PG&E's 85-felony-count guilty plea over the 2018 Camp Fire, has launched a criminal investigation into the Dixie Fire. If officials find PG&E equipment responsible for the latest blaze, and the evidence supports prosecution, the company could potentially be charged with a misdemeanor for failing to maintain vegetation properly or a felony for recklessly causing a fire, Ramsey said.

"It's a very active investigation at this point," he said.

PG&E's potential link to the Dixie Fire has also caught the attention of U.S. District Judge William Alsup, who oversees the company's probation arising from the deadly 2010 San Bruno gas pipeline explosion. Alsup on Wednesday ordered PG&E to file a statement by July 30 explaining "the full extent to which its equipment had any role" in starting the Dixie Fire and a smaller blaze earlier this month.

J.D. Morris is a San Francisco Chronicle staff writer. Email: [jd.morris@sfnchronicle.com](mailto:jd.morris@sfnchronicle.com) Twitter: @thejdmorris

