

MINUTES

CARBONDALE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

Thursday November 18, 2021

Commissioners Present:

Jay Engstrom, Chair
Jeff Davlyn
Nick Miscione
Marina Skiles
Kim Magee
Kade Gianinetti (1st Alternate)
Elizabeth Cammack (2nd Alternate)

Staff Present:

Janet Buck, Planning Director
John Leybourne, Planner
Mary Sikes, Planning Assistant

Commissioners Absent:

Nicholas DiFrank, Vice-Chair
Jarrett Mork

Other Persons Present Virtually

Keith Walzak/Cushing Terrell
Dave Dixon/Cushing Terrell
Nora Bland/Cushing Terrell
Patrick Hunter
Frosty Marriott

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. by Jay Engstrom.

October 14, 2021 Minutes:

Jeff made a motion to approve the October 14, 2021 minutes. Marina seconded the motion, and they were approved unanimously, with Jay abstaining.

Public Comment – Persons Present Not on the Agenda

There were no persons present to speak on a non-agenda item.

Janet explained the scope and process of the Comprehensive Plan Update. She said that after the Comp Plan is adopted that there is still more work to be done with the Unified Development Code (UDC). She said that she won't go back into the history as she has been covering that in emails.

Comprehensive Plan Update – Consultant Team Cushing Terrell (CT) Meeting #6

The consultant team discussed the Draft Plan Implementation Strategies.

Keith said that he just gave a planning 101 presentation to the Glenwood Springs City Council tonight. He said that it was unbelievable timing as there are two new

Commissioners in Carbondale tonight. He shared his screen and stated that it will help with the context for everyone. He said that behind the scenes as we have been giving you pieces of the plan and deliverables along the way, we have jumped ahead to develop a plan template. He said that the template is laying the document out and that when we get the revised content from everyone that we can drop that content in, with maps and graphics. He said that we will turn that around and get this preliminary draft to Janet. He said that it is true as a collective group you have not seen a draft plan yet, but you have seen many pieces. He said that we have been asking you to focus on the content. He said that we are going to take your input in the next couple of weeks and put it into the preliminary draft plan. He said that is when you will see it all coming together and that we realize that you haven't seen that but there has been a reason because it is so important to focus on the content.

Keith said that he would like to point out what we were just talking to Glenwood Springs about this evening. He said that Colorado State Statutes has a long tradition of planning, which goes back many decades. He said that the way the statutes are written it really lends credence to the Planning Commissions. He said that for the jurisdictions that have established Planning Commissions like yourself, according to the Colorado State Statutes you as a Planning Commission are technically the authors of your Comprehensive Plan. He said that is why it is important to embrace this plan and take a hold of it and say what you believe it needs to say because you are endorsing and approving it and then you are sending it on to the Board of Trustees. He said that not every town or municipality in the State of Colorado does Comprehensive Plans. He said that if they do not have a Planning Commission, they are not required to do a Comp Plan. He said that the phrase on the bottom, the purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to "guide development, within the municipality and its environs, in accordance with present and future needs, that best promotes the health, safety or it could be the prosperity and general welfare of the citizenry." He said that is a big task that you have in front of you. He said that when you go a little deeper, master plans are advisory, they are policy. He said that they are not law per say, it is an advisory document, it sets the guidance going forward. He said the question is, is it a binding document and that the answer is yes. He said that if the Town of Carbondale refers to the Comprehensive Plan in your development regulations, it is a legally binding document. He said that you as a Commission refer back to it when you are making judgements about development projects, which is why the Comprehensive Plan is really important. He said that Comprehensive Plans are updated every ten years or so, depending on a lot of different variables, as needed. He said that we typically look ahead ten to twenty years, depending on the data.

Keith said that planning is different than zoning, which is what Janet was just explaining. He said that you are developing a policy plan, you are not updating the UDC or modifying zoning. He said that we have talked a lot about zoning over the course of the last few months because there is an interrelationship between the plan and zoning, but we are not updating the zoning. He said that the zoning provides the detail needed for the legal effect of the plan's policies.

Dave outlined in the presentation on the screen the six steering committee meetings.

Nora gave an update on the community engagement;

Virtual Public Meeting in Spanish on October 27, 2021. She said that there was a low turnout, so the lessons learned are;

- The most effective form of outreach in the Spanish-speaking community is personal invitation.
- Organizations like Valley Settlement/Manaus need to be identified/contracted early on, as they were not available to help us out this time.
- In-person meetings will generate better engagement and response from the Spanish-speaking community than virtual meetings.

Virtual Public Meeting in English on October 28, 2021. She said that we had a great turnout for this meeting. She said that the recording from this meeting is available on the website for those that couldn't tune in.

Key Takeaways

- Continue to push climate and housing efforts.
- Investments in the environment are worth the cost.
- Keeping Carbondale's character is paramount.
- Look to other tools besides inclusionary zoning for affordable housing.
- Target redevelopment sites for affordable housing that compliments Town character.

Nora said that in the virtual meetings we did a series of polls, which is available online through the end of next week as well as in paper format at Town Hall.

Future Engagement Opportunities

- Tonight
- Draft Recommendations Poll: Nov 3 – Nov 28
Same as polls from Virtual Meetings
- Draft Plan Poll: mid Dec – early Jan
 - Future Land Use Map
 - Implementation Plan
- Adoption Hearings (dates TBD)

Nora reviewed results from the draft recommendations poll to date, sixty-eight in number. Some of the comments were in favor of infill developments and regulating short-term rentals.

Elizabeth asked if the presentation just shown was also in Spanish.

Nora said that the poll is in English and Spanish, both on the website and the paper copy.

Elizabeth asked if the reports that were going to come out would be in Spanish.

Janet said that she would love to see the Comprehensive Plan update translated into Spanish. She said that at the Chart Carbondale website that you can look at it in either Spanish or English. She said that the presentations that have been done are in both as well.

Elizabeth said that we her experience in the schools that having the translations makes it more inviting for the Hispanic members to attend.

Marina asked why there were so few respondents.

Nora explained that there were fortyish in the meeting that came out as a Zoom poll and that not everyone that attended the meeting took the poll. She said that the other twenty something is from the website.

Marina said that she is curious why we only got sixty-eight for this one and hundreds for the first one.

Nora explained that with the first survey that it was open longer and that now towards the end of the process that timelines are getting shortened. She explained that we did a lot more printed surveys with the outreach at the beginning, including many postcards handed out at a First Friday event. She said at the end of the project that there is not as much available resource to do as big of an outreach as we did before. She said that PR Studio has been on top of it trying to get the word out about this survey. She said that in addition, it required reading through the presentation slides or watch the recording of the presentation. She said sometimes that could be a barrier if people feel that it is more homework.

Jay asked if a poll had to be totally complete for it to be counted if they only made it halfway through and would it just disappear.

Nora said that she thought it would need to be finished but that she would check on that and that she would link up with PR Studio and get back to you.

Marina said that was a great question and that sixty-eight doesn't feel represented.

Nora added that the poll is open until November 28 so there is more time.

Keith asked if the analytics measures the people that log-on to the survey verses people that finish verses people that make it halfway through. He said that when there are technical aspects in a survey and that it gets too long that you will lose people.

Nora said that this survey is shorter than the first survey that we did.

Keith explained a graphic displayed showing two things;

- The progression of the study so far with the Comp Plan Update.
- Deliverables that we were contractually responsible for.

Dave explained the current future Land Use Map (2013, with updates);

Minimal Change

- Developed neighborhoods, largely single-family built-out neighborhoods
- Employment/Light Industrial
- Public Facilities
- New Urban
- Auto Urban
- Downtown (has a few additions)

Dave outlined the areas of proposed changes;

- Areas of FLUM change
- Mobility
 - Future pedestrian connections
 - Future Vehicle Connections
 - Future Round-about
- Municipal Boundary

Elizabeth asked for clarification of what was changing, land use etc.

Dave explained that it is both where the land is designated and what is behind it the designation, pointing to proposed areas of change on the map.

- Old Town Residential extended, capture historic residential character areas.
- Residential future land use categories, to reflect future outcomes in certain areas and to support housing demand.
- Transition areas, where design guidance can be enhanced to ensure neighborhood compatibility.
- Mobility, enhancements located in anticipation of a transportation master planning effort.
- Areas outside of municipal boundaries that Town owns and County islands in town.

Dave explained the proposed future land use map and categories.

Future discussion ensued regarding Residential/High Density (R/HD) and transition areas.

Janet asked if changes could still be made to the proposed Future Land Use Map.

Dave answered yes.

Marina suggested that Second Street be a safety corridor because of the kids getting to school.

Dave agreed with Marina and stated that the identifying these mobility corridors on this map would be a great idea if the Steering Committee agrees. He said that they could be used in the future for the Master Transportation Plan.

Elizabeth said that in recent years sidewalks were widened and added in the school areas and that it would be helpful to add them to the map.

Further discussion ensued regarding routes of travel for kids going to school.

Proposed “White Paper” recommendations and Implementation Matrix

Dave explained that these are not the draft plan update, and he explained the implantation table process, in a table on the screen.

Dave reviewed the Implementation Matrix changes and template;

- Strategies
- Action items to accomplish that strategy.
- Strategy Cross-References
- Responsible Department/Agency
- Priority, High, Medium and Low

Dave explained the Implementation Strategies showing a goal and went over examples, following the table across.

Marina asked what the difference was between the Mother Earth and Sustainability goals.

Dave said that the sustainability goal is as a legacy from the previous plan to where we are today with the emphasis on climate action. He said that sustainability (Infrastructure, health and wellness) is about building your community from an infrastructure standpoint to sustain the health, wellness and long-term sustainability of the infrastructure of the Town. He said that when something comes through it can be referred to for parks, streets, trees and landscaping, these things that we know make a healthy community, in a green way.

Dave said that Mother Earth will have all the climate action and the green house gas reduction pieces.

Discussed ensued regarding the term Mother Earth.

Jeff asked about the process for prioritizing the strategies.

Dave said that there was carryover from the 2013 Comp Plan and that they did have priorities assigned to them. He said that he would recommend starting from scratch, he said that we could keep the number from the previous plan if that is what you would like to do.

Keith said that there are several factors that could help decide the priority level, resource availability, funding, staffing, community priorities. He said that there is qualitatively and quantitative criteria that could be applied. He said that it is a collaboration between Janet and Town Staff, depending on resources.

Jeff asked for clarification about the numbering within the level of each priority.

Dave said it would be a typo of columns that got condensed in formatting.

Dave said that maybe something that was part of the UDC update would be a high priority. He said it will make your job a lot easier as you assign priorities to each strategy.

Keith said that from the survey that one of the highest-ranking elements was the mobility, well over sixty-six percent of the respondents said that this is important. He said one of the very first logical steps to us is should the Town develop a stand-alone Transportation Master Plan that digs into the details that Marina and others are talking about today. He said that Kevin will need to decide how he can put some money aside in his capital program to actually do a Transportation Plan. He said that it may not happen this year but perhaps the following year. He said that often it is staffing and resources that drive the priorities, he said that we shouldn't let those be the only drivers.

Marina asked what the next steps were for the P&Z.

Keith said that it's a homework assignment. He said that this is not the end of the process, but a way for Cushing Terrell to deliver a product to you so that you can deliberate to create the plan going forward. He said how you want us to assist going forward is up to you. He said that we want to help participate and we can talk through it to see what the options are.

Keith said three questions we need answered are;

- Do we have the goal topics one through nine correct?
- Are the strategies correct, did we miss anything?
- What are highest priorities versus lower priorities.

He said that this is the homework assignment for the next two to three weeks.

Jay said that he wasn't sure how we were to be delivering information back to you. He said that he was sure that his priorities could be different from other Commissioners and Staff.

Keith said that you'll have to do a work session to figure it out and debate it. He said that you need to put it into a single document to us, saying what you want to do from the Planning Commission to help us get to the preliminary draft level.

Kade suggested a survey.

Further discussion ensued regarding the timeline and the process for the preliminary draft Comp Plan Update document coming in December.

Jay said that we have a lot of stuff titled "draft", which can be confusing. He said that we see the draft white paper or is this the draft of the draft.

Keith said that he appreciates that input and that everything is a draft. He said that it is never final until it goes to you and the Board of Trustees to finalize it.

Jeff said that what he finds confusing is the formatting of the Implementation Strategies and possibly some duplication. He said that it isn't the easiest document to scan and that he wondered way to offer umbrella categories in the overall goals. He gave an example referring to "everything about water" as being in one goal.

Further discussion ensued about formatting and Cushing Terrell completing the updates prior to the Commission doing their homework.

Keith said that it is back in our court and that it has been volleyed back to us. He said that we need to take a close look at the nine goal statements or is it eight, the strategies and getting it down to a singular topic. He said that we need to organize it in such a way so that it is legible and making some edits and then turning that around to you. He said that it is in our court before you spend your time on it.

Jeff said that he really liked how Kade described the difference between sustainability resilience and ecology. He said that he doesn't want that to be lost if we combine.

Nora suggested a Google spreadsheet so that everyone can do it in their own time and to also see what others were thinking adding notes. She said that if you choose to have a work session and talk through what everyone has put in as their priority.

Jeff agreed with Nora and stated that would be more efficient.

Janet said that she would like to emphasize not making decisions where the public can't watch or have final feedback as well as the public to comment on the prioritization. She said that we might need to notice a work session and that she likes the way that you are thinking to be more efficient. She said that everyone needs to be doing this independently and not gathering.

Jay said that he thinks that it would be good to do this so that then we could have a work session that is effective.

Further discussion ensued regarding the Steering Committee versus P&Z clarification.

Keith said that Cushing Terrell will be working on the Implementation Strategies next week and resolve the input given tonight. He said that we will be sticking to our schedule and getting Janet a preliminary draft plan by the second week of December.

He said that we are going to be working in parallel and we will be getting this revised strategy document that is updated so that you all can be working on your own schedule. He said that we will start putting the document together and get that to Janet and have internal conversations with her to make sure that it is done right. He said that we don't need to have this project completed by January 1 and that it needs to be well thought out and that everyone needs to be very comfortable with the document.

Marina agreed and said that this next step might be the most critical.

Jay also agreed and said that he wants to make sure that we can work through this and that we are comfortable with this. He said as the Steering Committee that this is our responsibility and that we all feel good about it.

Jay opened the discussion to the public.

Patrick Hunter said that Marina has been outstanding this evening and he thanked her for digging into this process. He asked everyone if they knew how big Carbondale was in square miles? He said that there is an awful lot of work going on over two square miles. He said that he has been here almost thirty years and fifty years in the valley. He said that we wouldn't be having this discussion if wasn't for the climate change, which is driving a lot of people into this valley, climate refugees. He said that they are bidding up the price of real estate and providing an environment that is developer rich, so that we are getting a lot of growth all of a sudden. He said that it is spurring a lot of the conversation and a lot of the issues that we are dealing with right now. He said whether or not this approach that we are looking at this redo of the Comp Plan will get where we want to go is a good question. He said that he has been taking classes at Colorado Mountain College and that one of them is on including Indigenous people and that their practice was to use a council of elders. He said that you guys are sort of that right now. He said that his feeling is that the issues that are brought up, housing, water or some other thing, are all so interrelated and that it's hard to take one and say let's just do this. He said that it is an overall process and that we have to look at the whole. He said that he thinks that it is good to take some time and to look this stuff over because it is important and complicated. He said that he thinks that there could be more input and that the guys on the E-board were hoping to get involved at some point and maybe a joint meeting with you folks and us by be useful. He said that we could invite a few other people who have been around town for awhile to come in and kick the can and see what we can come up with.

Frosty Marriott said that he is quite impressed with the amount of work that you all have done from the start of this to where you are tonight. He said he has a few thoughts that

he will send to Janet over the weekend. He said that he would combine climate action and sustainability. He said our solvency and our growth is in pretty good shape. He said that it is important to consider a no growth or slow growth option at this point in time. He said that he thinks that for various reasons but that you can't have uncontrolled growth when you have finite resources like water and that it is unwise and impossible. He said that our VCAP studies show that we are at risk of water shortages and that we have millions of dollars allocated to be spent to expand water to growth that is not here yet. He said that we need to be aware of that. He said that he doesn't like the Downtown North misnomer and that he never saw it in the Comprehensive Plan in 2013 when he was on the Board. He said that it was called the Overlook project when it came forward and almost got approved. He said that he thinks it would be more appropriate to call it the Overlook Property, overlooking the dog park, than Downtown North because it's really not downtown. He said the developer mantra is if you are not really growing you are dying, which is like cancer. He said that when you look around maybe the whole world is dying right now. He said that you have to rethink that mantra. He said that it is important to pay attention to the affordable housing to the regional occurrences in the valley and what are in the local papers. He said that it is not just our problem, it is a whole valley problem. He said that it is important that we pay close attention to what is going on, Glenwood is saying that they are going to do a moratorium on residential development. He said that he brought that up on Highway 133 a year ago and that he got no traction. He said that Basalt passed a bond issue for eighteen million dollars to solve their affordable housing problem and to bring green systems. He said that if we did ten million dollars in Carbondale on a bond issue and we could build a hundred units at five hundred square feet at two hundred dollars a foot, without the land, it would give us a hundred units of workforce housing. He said that it is possible to do that and that we need to change the paradigm around housing. He said that the twenty-eighty thing ain't going to do it. He said that he thinks that it should flip to eighty-twenty the other way and let the developer tell us where they can make a reasonable return on their money and not fifty thousand dollars a pop on a unit. He said that they make a public service company, if you invest a million dollars you can make twelve percent, whatever the number is. He said that is what he would like to see happening. He said that he really appreciates everyone's time and hard work. He said that it's great to see some old friends on the screen.

Jeff said that John Leybourne shared with us the number of units that were in the pipeline and that it is referenced in the current conditions report.

Keith said that it is in the existing conditions report and that he thinks that three hundred seventy-five units were in the pipeline, whether approved or in construction.

Jeff said that Frosty's point is taken and that there are more units in the last eighteen months than the last ten years. He said that John also referenced that Carbondale is the only community in the valley that is adding affordable housing and that it is completely driven by our requirements of developers.

Marina asked John if the Town of Carbondale is governed by the Garfield County housing authority?

John explained that we are not governed by them and that they administer our housing program. He said that they are not part of Garfield County itself and that they are a separate entity that manages our affordable housing program.

Jeff said that the requirements on developers are ours.

John said that they are governed by the community housing guidelines and the requirements that we have in the UDC. He said that the Roadmap Group, Aspen, Pitkin County, Eagle County, Glenwood Springs, Basalt, Carbondale, Garfield County met and that several years ago the Regional Housing Task Force came out with a Regional Housing Study and Initiative. He said that the whole group for the Roaring Fork Valley Roadmap and Recovery from COVID group actually voted to start a subcommittee to rebuild the regional housing program to have a regional plan to provide affordable housing versus each community doing their own. He said that we are currently the leaders in providing affordable housing with our requirements in the Code and the Guidelines.

Jay said that is cool that we are the leaders and that we should keep it that way.

Marina said that she would like clarification of next steps in a follow-up from CT.

Nora said that the next step would be for us to get you the Google document as a spreadsheet for you all to fill out on your own. She said then maybe Janet can send a Doodle poll for a work session to everyone to talk through the spreadsheet.

Janet said ideally the week after Thanksgiving to try to pull together a work session. She said that you do need time to go through and prioritize everything. She said that first CT is going to go through and fix the spreadsheet.

Nora said that a reasonable goal is to get that to you by Monday so that everyone can have a week with it.

Further discussion ensued on the timeline.

Jay thanked CT for everything that they have done as well as being open with our conversations. He said that we have a lot of ideas and that we are bouncing stuff off left and right and that he appreciates them working with us on that. He said that he appreciates all of the P&Z members because the last several months have been a lot of work. He said Staff as well and that they are crushing it right now.

Elizabeth said as a new member that she is a little overwhelmed and that she is so impressed with what the Commission has already done and accomplished. She said that she'll do her best to catch up but that everyone has really done an amazing job.

Dave said that it has been a pleasure working with you as well and that you are a really creative group and it's always more fun that way.

Staff Update

Janet said that next Tuesday that she was asked to go to the Board meeting to give the Trustees an update on the Comp Plan process, which consumed a couple of her days this week unexpectedly. She said in her memo that she took a lot of the background information that she compiled for the Commission, which needed to be done. She said that she needed to document how focus groups and design charettes got together and in tandem she had PR Studio put together a summary of their outreach efforts. She said that once we put it all together that she was pretty happy with it. She said that when you here people say that we didn't involve the community that it gives us the data. She said that the Commission is welcome to come to the meeting or Zoom in. She said that she is not inviting CT and that she is just giving them an update and try to answer questions. She said that we will notice it and send an invite.

John said that some background on the Roadmap Group, he said that they were originally established because DOLA has provided some funding to allow the region to do some planning for resiliency. He said that includes workforce resiliency, housing and everything we went through with the whole COVID pandemic. He said that housing was a topic brought up and that the meeting today was rather fruitful knowing that everyone wanted to pickup the Regional Housing Authority again to get that toolbox back in place to allow for more cooperation between all of the entities. He said that the end goal is to get the group back together so everyone can work together. He said that the housing issue is more pronounced now. He said that we are still busy and that he is sending out the Zoom invite right now.

Mary stated that we received four more building permit submittals for four more buildings in Main Street Marketplace.

Janet said that these are the stilt houses in the center area. She said that there are eleven buildings all together on Lot 1.

Janet said that we have the Planning Story Map on the Town's website when there are any questions. She said that she meets with our map maker once a month to keep it updated. She said that you can see all of the developments going through the land use process with conceptual drawings with the site plans. She said that there is a page for buildings under construction. She said that this is for the larger more significant developments. She said that it is easier to point people to the website when they have questions.

John said that Janet was hard at work today for the Town Manager interviews.

Janet said that the Board will interview the candidates tomorrow and then we will see what happens for Town Manager selection.

Marina said that we had a meeting that was about Thompson Park a while ago that we were concerned about what was being built was not what we had approved. She said

that at some point we had asked to review the fences being built before they were constructed. She said that now there are fences all over there. She said where is the Town with that and the regulations. She asked if anyone had been over there and that there were a lot of fences, some really high.

Janet said that she remembers talking about the building materials and that she doesn't recall a conversation about the fences. She said that they did get a building permit for the fences and that all of the fences comply with the code. She said that our code allows eight-foot-high fences.

Marina said that it seems that Thompson Park is still doing whatever they want to do.

Further discussion ensued regarding the fences at Thompson Park.

Commissioner Comments

Jeff thanked Janet for her persistent emails catching everyone up on this Comp Plan process.

Marina welcomed Kade and Elizabeth.

Jeff said that our high school is the first public high school in twenty years to win the soccer State championship.

Kade said that when he and Jay were in school that we lost two in a row.

Motion to Adjourn

A motion was made by Jay to adjourn, Jeff seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.