

**MINUTES**  
CARBONDALE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION  
Thursday July 14, 2022

**Commissioners Present:**

Jay Engstrom, Chair  
Marina Skiles  
Kim Magee  
Nick Miscione  
Jarrett Mork  
Kade Gianinetti (1<sup>st</sup> Alternate)

**Staff Present:**

John Leybourne, Planner  
Mary Sikes, Planning Assistant

**Commissioners Absent:**

Nicholas DiFrank, Vice-Chair  
Jeff Davlyn

**Other Persons Present**

Niki Delson, 1056 Village Road  
Sue Zislis, 648 Surrey Road  
Bella Fabela, 491 Morrison Street  
Judy Blanchard, 905 Melissa Lane  
Larry Bogatz, 476 Settlement Lane

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Jay Engstrom.

**May 26, 2022 Minutes:**

Jarrett made a motion to approve the May 26, 2022 minutes. Kade seconded the motion, and they were approved unanimously.

**June 9, 2022 Minutes:**

Marina made a motion to approve the June 9, 2022 minutes with revised change to a motion. Jarrett seconded the motion, and they were approved unanimously.

**Public Comment – Persons Present Not on the Agenda**

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

**CAFCI Discussion**

Niki Delson, Co-Chair of CAFCI (Carbondale Age-Friendly Community Initiative) led the discussion and introduced herself.

Niki thanked Janet Buck and said that without her she would not have know anything about Planning and Zoning. She said that Janet was at our first inaugural event and that at every step of the way that her door was always open. She thanked John too for mentoring them along the way.

Niki said that tonight that they would like to introduce the Commission to the concept of “Age-Friendly Communities”.

The following three items were explained and discussed;

- Overview of Age-Friendly Communities
- The Eight Domains of Livability
- Aging in Community – From the Comprehensive Plan to the Unified Development Code: Turning Philosophy Into Action

Nikki said that Carbondale has three wonderful designations;

- Creative Arts District
- Gold Standard Bike Friendly Community
- Thirteenth community in Colorado – AARP Network (American Association of Retired People)

Nikki said that CAFCI is a group of people that got together with a vision and desire to see Carbondale become more Age-Friendly. She asked how do you create a community that is friendly to the very young and the very old and everyone in between, a separate branch of AARP became formalized as Age Friendly Network States and Communities and became an independent affiliate of the World Health Organization (WHO). She said that the WHO has twenty years of research on livable communities. She said that became the foundation of the AARP network, which in made up of six hundred sixty different members. She said that Pitkin and Eagle Counties are members, and that Garfield County did not join the network.

Nikki said that we are here, three and half years with our strategic plan of a five-year plan. She asked how do we work with non-profits and government entities to institutionalize the concept of age-friendly communities, that is our focus for the next year and a half and that’s why we are here tonight. She said that Planning and Zoning is probably the most important Commission in being able to get this built in, woven into the fabric of our community.

Nikki said that what distinguishes Carbondale from many of the other communities is that we come from the bottom up. She said that we are people organizing in the community and most of the other Age-Friendly Communities are government entities that are usually under the umbrella of senior services. She said that AARP really looked to us as a new model of how you work institutionally within all of the elements of government to have a concept, a vision, and an inspiration become policy.

Nikki said that being part of a network of six hundred sixty different communities gives us access to information and research. She said that AARP does support us, not financially, as our budget is zero. She said that we were a catalyst to become the Age Friendly Community Initiative and that we brought that to the Board of Trustees in 2019. She explained that the Town owns the designation of Age-Friendly Community. She said that when the Board of Trustees signed on to be an Age-Friendly Community they

promised to “Actively work with residents and local advocates to make their town, city, county or state become a more Age-Friendly place to live.” She said that joining the network gives the Town of Carbondale inspiration by showing what can be done because we are part of six hundred sixty members. She gave an example of assessing parks and that the Parks and Recreation Department goes out every year to assess parks but that they didn’t have an instrument or tool to do the assessing. She said that she went on to the bulletin board of members and asked if there was an instrument that anyone uses to assess parks, playgrounds, and public spaces. She said that within three hours she had the instrument and provided it to Eric Brendlinger, after the software developer customized it for the kinds of open spaces that we have. She said that AARP provides inspiration, connection, and support.

Nikki continued by saying that when she was talking to Cushing Terrell (CT) they asked “How do you put this into language that can go into the Updated Comp Plan or the Unified Development Code (UDC).” She said that she called up the Colorado AARP and asked them that question and that she found out that they have a relationship with the Public Policy Institute. She said that they sent us information on how to language it in certain ways, for the code.

Nikki said that she wants to distinguish between aging from aged. She said how we language what we are doing is really important because we are all aging in community from the time we are conceived until we are finished. She said that we would like to think of it as a process and that the older adults that are speaking tonight are just further along that continuum.

Nikki stated that she would like everyone to understand what the eight domains of livability are, which have been developed by the WHO, as they have done research on what makes a community livable for the very young, the very old and for everyone in between.

Bella Fabela, with Larry Bogatz translating;

I am Bella Fabella, and I am a member of the CAFCI Steering Committee.

Age-friendly Communities use a particular framework to organize and prioritize their work so that their communities become more livable for people of all ages. This framework focuses on eight domains:

- Outdoor Spaces and Buildings;
- Transportation;
- Housing;
- Social Participation;
- Work and Civic Engagement;
- Communication and Information;
- Community and Health Services;
- Respect and Social inclusion.

These are described in more detail in your packet.

I would like to give you a couple of Carbondale examples as they apply to “Respect and Social Inclusion” and where improvements could be made.

I am the only Latina who goes to the Wednesday Senior Lunches at the Orchard. Many of my Latino friends do not know about the lunches and they don’t go because they don’t have transportation, and they may feel embarrassed because they don’t think their English is good enough.

I also remember about 25 years ago while working at the Carbondale library I assisted with their transportation program which gave rides to many young people. Now there is no ride program and very little Hispanic participation in youth activities.

Here is another example: The Latino community is a large part of the Carbondale population. However, when government meetings and communications are only in English, our opinions aren’t known. We would like to contribute and be part of our hometown’s decisions, and Spanish translation would make us feel more welcome and allow us to be more active participants.

Sue Zislis introduced herself and read a recommendation on page 73 of the Comp Plan Update;

*Implement universal design elements into the UDC to better accommodate the typical functional challenges that occur throughout human development.*

She said that through life the circumstances of our existence are constantly shifting, not just of age but of ability. She went on to say that it happens to everyone through the aging process. She said that there is a spectrum of age and also of ability. She said that when this happens, even temporarily, you are disabled. She said that Carbondale is now tasked with creating and sustaining a town that enables an active lifestyle for everybody regardless of their current status on the ability spectrum.

Sue said that Planning and Zoning is at the core of this action. She explained that Universal Design is not the same as ADA. She went on to say that the Americans with Disabilities Act are a civil rights legal imperative that prohibit discrimination against people with disabilities in terms of access to public places. She gave the example of ramps into a public building that has steps.

Sue said that Universal Design is a barrier-free concept that supports inclusiveness. She said that it applies to user friendly design in broader terms than just for the issues that impact older people. She stated that accommodations for mobility challenges are the most compelling and the most noticeable. She said that Universal Design can level the playing field for all sorts of challenges.

Sue continued by saying that signage used to communicate an important message with high-contrast picture symbols instead of words will help more people understand the

message. She gave another example regarding windows that open side to side, instead of up and down, and that you are more likely to independently let fresh air into your home, which is a design issue.

Sue said that Universal Design makes self-reliant life easier and safer even for the most agile. She continued by giving more examples. She said that when housing developers include Universal Design features more people anywhere on the ability spectrum are enabled to stay in their homes and communities they love for much longer.

Sue continued by telling another story of a long-time local that would benefit from having an entry level bed and bath or a home with an elevator. She said that right now Carbondale has very few options for anyone of any age that is hoping to reduce their dependence on steps. She said that Universal Design says that if there has to be steps there are several strategies in the design of those steps that can reduce strain and increase safety for anybody of any age who hopes to be safer and less dependent on stairs.

Sue stated that equity in the workplace and all public spaces indoors and outdoors can also improve under the Universal Design umbrella that includes strategies to include all sorts of community engagement. She gave another example of someone with a temporary handicap parking sticker because of recovery from surgery that was complicated and wanting to go to a performance in the park. She said that you are unclear as to the safety and mobility in the park for the entire evening, if the park had a website that described parking availability, seating accommodations, and lighted pathways you could make that decision, whether to attend the concert. She said what we are saying is if there were up to date websites that accurately describe accessibility features for public places someone could know ahead of time to plan a safer outing within their current ability. She said that this is a core Universal Design concept.

Sue gave kudos to Roaring Fork Outdoor Volunteers because they updated their website to include accessibility information for everybody who lives in Carbondale.

Sue said that the wide range of Universal Design applications demonstrates support for inclusiveness and the diversity of human existence using strategies where everyone benefits.

Sue said that CAFCI fully backs the inclusion of the recommendation on page 73, of the Comp Plan Update, to incorporate Universal Design elements into the UDC and that we also offer our assistance in any way needed.

Judy Blanchard, Co-Chair of CAFCI, summarized five points;

- Aging in community focuses on aging not aged.
- The Town owns the Age-Friendly designation, not CAFCI.
- The P&Z is a real important player because the Commission will be taking the Comprehensive Plan and turning it into action and then turning action into code, in the UDC.

- There is a difference between ADA accommodations and Universal Design.
- As part of an Age-Friendly community we are part of a network of over sixty hundred sixty national communities and millions of people through the WHO Livable Communities' Program. We have access to evidence-based practices and resources that can help Carbondale continue to improve.

Judy said in closing that you are somewhere on the aging continuum and that you too would want a rich and rewarding life as you move along that continuum. She said hopefully you can live out a long healthy life in the community of your choice. She said that we are here to contribute and assist in any way we can.

Jay thanked CAFCI for all of their participation in the Comp Plan Update.

Judy thanked everyone and said that our municipal government from the Board of Trustees and all the Commissions and all of the people working for the Town are so open and accessible. She said that it is such a pleasure and that she moved here from the Washington, D.C. area and that it is a pleasure to work together.

Marina asked CAFCI if there were any additional comments for the Comp Plan Update.

Nikki said that it was really wonderful working with Janet on the Comp Plan Update. She said that we went to almost all of the focus groups and we asked if we could red-line the Comp Plan Update? She said that Janet said go for it and give us what your thinking is. She said that it took us days and most of it is already in the update.

Nikki said other than what we have already stated, an important piece is the Town having a Master Transportation Plan outside of just the circulator is probably what most people are talking about. She gave examples of all of the people that are in need of transportation, from all areas of Town and age groups. She said that we have the vision of not wanting to be autocratic in Carbondale and wanting people to have alternative means of transportation. She continued by saying that we are needing multi-model corridors for all ages and that Highway 133 is a nightmare in terms of safety.

Nikki continued by saying, how do you assess a dangerous intersection and how do you provide that information to CDOT, that has control over the highway, and waiting for someone to get killed, which has actually already happened. She said that through the network we came up with what is called a walk audit. She said that we walk audit every single priority corridor in Carbondale and as a result CAFCI does walk audits annually and that Carbondale has doubled the budget for maintenance of sidewalks and trails completed by the Public Works Department. She said that we got this into the Comp Plan Update as well as almost everything we suggested.

Nikki said that there is a section called Aging In Community but what is more important for us is to not have it as a separate item but instead as an umbrella, so that it does not look like older people are fighting with younger people for the limited resources that there are in any community. She asked how do you plan a community that makes it accessible for the very young and the very old? She said that one of the reasons that

AARP started to look at what we are doing here is because they recognized that you get a lot more participation when you are not fighting amongst groups for the limited resources but instead how do you create a town, which comes down to Planning and Zoning. She said that you will be able to create this vision so when we are no longer capable it is part of the fabric of the community that other people will advocate for.

There was a handout on Universal Design distributed from CAFCI.

Further discussion ensued regarding Universal Design and the process of applications that come before the P&Z.

John explained that the 2013 Comprehensive Plan has a matrix, which drives future amendments to the UDC. He explained that with the Comp Plan amendment that we are going through now a lot of items brought up tonight and in the red-lined version are also built into the implementation matrix. He said that the matrix guides P&Z's purview to make amendments to the UDC, to put those items within the UDC itself. He said that it would make it the law of the land, as Nick stated. He said that if a developer comes in and makes proposals, it could be requested to add Universal Design to some of your smaller units. He said that the first step is the Comprehensive Plan, that everyone has participated in, and once we get that adopted then we can start going down the Implementation Matrix looking for amendments, which is how the process works.

Jay explained that the Comp Plan would be a document referred to by other Commissions too for other processes going on in Carbondale.

Jarrett asked why Garfield County was not included in the AARP network?

Nikki stated that John Martin signed off on Garfield County becoming an Age-Friendly community and that is where it got left.

Jarret asked for clarification of the benefit of this network.

Judy explained that there are many evidence-based resources and practices. She said that there are many groups that we can talk to and that they have Challenge Grants, which we can apply for. She said that we just got a grant to develop the Human Nature Park, off Eighth Street, which will have accessible benches. She said that there are other grants that come up and they guide us to other grantors', which is a wealth of information.

Nikki gave another example of a benefit joining the network, how do you turn this language into code? She said that we would call Colorado AARP and that Roberto could come down and that he might confer with another state. She said that the assessment tool for the parks was developed elsewhere. She said that if any of the Commissions had a question, we could get the answer through the network. She talked about an example with Walk America, which helps communities' structure and develop infrastructure that makes pedestrians safer within the community. She said that AARP funded fellowships, which Sue and I both received as a six-month commitment, with an

action plan. She said that we get to talk to people all over the United States who have worked with pedestrian safety issues to develop an action plan that we could bring back to the Bike and Ped Commission, who would bring it to the Trustees. She said that we get the research and talk to the people that have actually done it, not just locally. She said that we are focused on Highway 133 currently because there have been three near misses in the last couple of months and that it is also dangerous by design.

Nikki said that one thing we found out looking at the action plan is that there is a lot of research that shows that street art, asphalt art at dangerous intersections actually has an impact on pedestrian safety. She said that you put artwork in the crosswalks and that the rates of near misses and pedestrian accidents gets diminished. She said that she never knew about this and that it was research presented to us in the third month of the walking college. She said that AARP brings us this information with easy access to get it.

Judy restated that if you have something that needs to be researched that we can do it for you.

Jarret asked Bella what would her ideal mode of transportation be to get around town?

Bella said that small buses, especially for the kids and that years ago there used to be one for the library, as well as for all of us that don't drive.

Further discussion ensued regarding a transportation plan.

Nick thanked everyone for sharing their wisdom and knowledge. He asked if CAFCI might know of someone that is a member of the Latin community who would be willing to act as a representative on this Commission.

Further discussion ensued regarding how to get this information out and that the P&Z ads should be bilingual.

### **Commission Discussion Work Session – Comp Plan Update**

The Commission agreed to break their review up into sections of the Comprehensive Plan Update and tonight Sections 1.0 – 3.0 was completed with the following recommended changes;

- It was clarified that the purple text will be changed to black after the review is complete, the purple text is currently the new portion of the update.
- The Foreword should be moved to section 5.4 Climate Action Plan in the beginning of that section, with the heading Foreword removed, Page 8. (Foreword is misspelled)
- The title of the update should be 2013 Comprehensive Plan Updated.
- Remove the quick links, Page 7.
- Comprehensive Plan Update Framework, Page 11 should be moved to Page 15 and remove the Plan Framework wheel that is currently on Page 15.



- Remove the remaining Summary of Goals, Page 11 as it is repeated on Page 25.
- Combine 1.0 and 2.0, Executive Summary and Introduction, calling it Introduction explaining the process, framework and summary of goals with explanation of the 2013 and 2022 process.
- Color coding should match, i.e., Vision is orange on Page 32, and on Page 10 it is purple, and Introduction is dark blue and orange.
- Explain that the goals tie into the Implementation Matrix on Page 25.

### **Staff Update**

John said that the interviews were conducted for the Planning Director position today, with Jay attending too.

John said that Janet is currently at a rehab center in Eagle.

### **Commissioner Comments**

Marina invited everyone to Mountain Fair and that they are looking for Peace Patrollers or any volunteering would be helpful.

### **Motion to Adjourn**

A motion was made by Marina to adjourn, Jarrett seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m.