

Downtown Master Plan Meeting Summary

The Cottle Residence, March 26, 2014

How much of the \$5M bond has been spent? Is there a treasury dedicated to the Pan and Fork property?

Response: Monies from the bond cannot be moved to another category

How much was paid for the entire parcel? How can the town acquire it?

Response: The town would have to purchase the entire CDC parcel in order to control it.

Where is the parking for the RMI parcel? Does the RF Conservancy own the parcel that they intend to build on?

Did the town agree to include Lions Park in the white space on the map? Is it o.k. with the town to relocate?

Affordable housing will continue to be a problem in Basalt. Does the town have any funds to build affordable housing?

The numbers of people coming into town must increase and not just for warm weather events. Activities will encourage people to open their wallets, buy things, get haircuts, eat meals; foot traffic generates money; move people around to all parts of the downtown.

Keep the old funk of the downtown i.e., "messy vitality". Keep the Green Drake and Aspenalt (even though they are old buildings). Talk to Stan at the Aspenalt; perhaps buy the Aspenalt for employee housing.

Put the senior center with day care in downtown; send people into town not to Southside. Put day care center at St. Vincent's church. Steer people to that part of town. Move town hall and Alpine Bank to Riverwalk area to increase volume of people in that part of town.

Lions Park could be converted to a town square; to be a state of the art permanent venue for performances. Create a Basalt Boardwalk with food trucks and pushcarts leased to vendors with the town in control of the venue. Work smart, do not knock down all of the buildings; this does not have to be expensive.

RMI - Smart people doing smart work. This will bring intellectual life, intellectual capital to Basalt. Create an "egghead academy" that is research based and would host conferences similar to the TED conference, international design conference.

A diner in town would provide a place for people to hang out and bring people into Basalt. It would enliven the downtown.

We could use another form of grocery store such a food hub with a commercial kitchen and indoor farmer's market. There are lots of foodies in the valley and we need to provide a place for local food and caterers.

A nicer hotel downtown would bring in more people. Six to eight stories would trade off sprawl for height. It would be important to create balance between greater height and period buildings so as not to minimize the charm of the town.

A number of years ago, Don Ensign designed a deck from Two Rivers Road to the Clarks Market property that accommodated parking underneath.

When the Roaring Fork Club was first built, there was a noticeable increase in the action downtown. We need to continue to attract RFC residents to town with a vibe to keep them here. In 1999 there was concern about the vitality of downtown. It was thought then that more housing was needed and a variety of businesses and services. Core blocks in downtown could build on the historic character and have streets with a five minute walk filled with continuous activity so that visitors would say, "Let's go to Basalt and hang." This activity would attract businesses such as juice bars, microbreweries or wine bars. An affordable diner would draw people here the year round. It might be necessary to control the cost of rent so that businesses could thrive.

Connectivity is important. You need to be able to walk in all directions. A pedestrian bridge across the Roaring Fork River would provide a connection between the core and the library parcel. "I never walk to the library."

How much does hotel development cost? Could it be built on the school property, i.e., middle school stadium, baseball diamonds? What about converting an existing building? Would the Bob Ritchie building be a possibility? It is already built and has decent parking. It is a prime piece of riverfront property that is very marketable as residential in today's market. As a commercial rental property with 20,000 square feet, it may not rent for a number of years.

Take some aggressive action to recruit a developer to repurpose the building and turn it into something the market demands, i.e., condos, hotel.

Typically, master planning efforts look ahead 50 years into the future and could mean years of construction. Basalt needs a short and long term view. In the short term, use what you have and some of the plan has to be inexpensive.

Town of Basalt could incentivize infill in the downtown. An architectural firm moved from Aspen to Basalt specifically so that their employees could afford to own real estate. Recruit people to get in on the ground floor of something special.

Basalt needs more diversity. The town is getting older, whiter and grayer with fewer kids in the neighborhoods. We are losing a new generation of young people. Basalt is in a dangerous place; we cannot compete with YoYo Ma in Aspen or the diversity in Carbondale. We must face reality; we do not have the critical mass to support essential businesses i.e., a dry cleaner, grocery store, etc. This is all a well-intended pipe dream but all we have now is empty building stock.

Would ADU's in area homes address the affordable housing problem? Residents could fix up old buildings and get rental income. ADU's in other communities have not worked very well. Other local governments have the leadership to put their thumb on the scale to subsidize housing so that doctors and lawyers can live in their community. "This leadership is lacking in Basalt."

For the first time, we are looking at what we want to be and are more invested in the outcome. What would you do first? Change the code? Wave fees to keep people in town? Create critical mass, diversity and the rest will follow.

Where are the sites for affordable housing? Keep housing at an attainable level. The housing project next to Stubbies is a first step but it is only part of the solution.

Using exactions on private developers does not work. Make attainable housing a policy priority. Resort communities have not solved this problem well.

Is there any state or federal money available for this purpose? Is there money available to address the "ghetto" conditions in some trailer parks? The Archdiocese is still trying to get the project done in Willits.

The rivers are Basalt's biggest asset to attract locals and visitors. In addition, we have two of the coolest things, people and place.