

Downtown Area Advisory Committee (DAAC)
October 16, 2014
Basalt Town Council Chambers, 4:00 to 5:30 p.m.

Committee members present: Tracy Bennett, Chris Touchette, Steve Chase, Greg Shugars, Julie Kolar, Ted Guy, Gerry Terwilliger, Charlie Cole, Chris Lane

Staff present: Susan Philp, Larry Thompson, Denise Tomaskovic

Others present: Yancy Nichol, Sopris Engineering

A list of the public signing in for this meeting is available for review at Town Hall.

At 3:30 p.m. today some of the committee members met at the Pan and Fork parcel for a site visit. Other members met yesterday to tour the site. The Mayor's Cabinet representatives visited the site last Friday.

Agenda Item 1: Approval of minutes from October 9, 2014 DAAC meeting

M/S Cole and Guy to approve the Minutes of 10/9/14 as read. The motion carried unanimously.

Philp then explained how the meeting would proceed. The agenda order will be changed to allow for a smoother flow of discussion. Also, at the end of the meeting there will be time for the committee members to decide whether or not they want an extra meeting next Thursday, the 23rd. That is the first day of fall break for the Basalt schools so it wasn't originally included in the meeting schedule.

Agenda Item 2: Opportunities and Constraints

Philp introduced the Town Engineer, Larry Thompson, and Yancy Nichol, a civil engineer who has worked on many projects in and around Basalt.

Thompson explained the wetland creation mitigation process within the river improvements area and indicated their locations on a map. The area of the river closer to the Midland Avenue Bridge has improvements that are designed more toward human interaction with the river. The further one moves downstream the improvements being made are to enhance the habitat for fish and wildlife.

Thompson went on to explain how the development line came about. He fielded questions from the committee members regarding the technical aspects of the floodplain, the permitting process and the improvement phases. The floodplain line is close to the property line between the park area and the CDC parcel.

Philp added that when the River Stewardship Master Plan was adopted in 2002 the common understanding was that the river needed about 300 feet of width to move within (and this hasn't changed) so that's essentially how the development line was established. When public funds are used to purchase land there are additional and somewhat unique legal and political aspects to consider along with all the other considerations.

Nichol introduced himself and, in answer to a question from the committee, explained where the property lines are along Two Rivers Road and Midland Avenue. Nichol also explained the ground water level issues and the drainage mitigation that has been done on the site. At Philp's request, Nichol described the sewer line changes and location and where the utility and water lines were relocated.

Underground parking on the parcel was discussed. Referring to a drawing, Nichol explained that Two Rivers Road along the Pan and Fork parcel drops seven feet from the east end of the property to the west end. This is a greater drop than the ground water level and the river along that same distance. On the west end of the parcel the ground level floor of an underground parking structure could go about one foot below ground water on this site and not be hugely expensive.

Nichol said that on the east end of the parcel the ground water level is about four feet higher. Guy said that there are about 100 parking spaces in the parking structure across the street at Ute Center and that parking structure was built about one foot into the ground water level according to the 1990 flood plain line. The flood plain line has since been raised about 18 inches.

Nichol offered some options as to how a parking garage structure could be accommodated on the parcel. Construction costs would most likely range from \$36,000 to \$48,000 per parking space depending on the size of the structure and type of construction material.

Lane asked who would pay these costs. Is the Town going to pay or would the developer pay, or some combination thereof? Philp said this is more of a question for Bruce Kimmel and Mike Scanlon.

Nichol said that surface parking would be expensive, too.

Moving on to other considerations, Philp asked Thompson to address the feasibility of having a pedestrian bridge crossing from the Stott parcel [west of the library] to the park. Thompson said that the bridge span would have to be about 300 ft. long and quite high to remain outside of the flood plain and high water level.

The next subject was the possibility of creating a kayak park. Thompson said that the jetties that have been put in place would be great features for kayakers in high water. Because the river is rather flat in this stretch, installing drop structures would not be conducive to the river flow.

Kolar asked if Pitkin County has been in touch with the Town regarding its plans to build a kayak park upstream of the Basalt Avenue Bridge. Thompson said they have spoken and the County plans to install its kayak park features next year. They aren't interested in moving it further downstream because it would then be outside of Pitkin County in the stretch close to Fisherman's Park.

Nichol said that the ground water issues are basically the same on Lions Park and the Clark's Market parcel.

Agenda Item 3. Decisions – Establish initial “Givens” based on review of Our Town Planning Report

Philp shifted the group's focus to the community themes that were included in the Our Town Planning Report. Jim Kent said that the themes were developed through content analysis of the chat sessions and supported by the citizen plan drawings.

Touchette added that his understanding was that this committee was supposed to start with Option 2 (that received the most votes) as the basis for its deliberations in creating a plan.

Philp suggested that the Committee check in on the themes to determine if they want to include them as recommendations in their plan, with the eventual goal of developing a vision statement for the plan. She proposed an activity in which the committee members would indicate their three most important items with a blue dot. They were also given two red dots to indicate findings they didn't support or would like to discuss

further. Not placing a dot on a theme meant that the concept was acceptable to the member. (Photos of the exercise results will be placed on the Our Town Planning website.)

Chase suggested that this exercise be done again after the group has talked to experts who are able to further explain and elucidate the Z dimensions of possible scenarios. Lane said that he found this exercise to be a comparison between apples and oranges and not particularly helpful.

One of the themes up for further discussion was the perceived need for more hotel beds. It was suggested by Chase that East Basalt needs an anchor other than its natural resources. There is need for a more upscale hotel than what is currently available in East Basalt and putting it in a central location makes sense. Building a hotel that would have views of the river would be a good draw.

Terwilliger wasn't convinced that another hotel was needed anywhere in Basalt. There are currently 64 hotel beds on this side of town and another 112 being constructed in Willits for the Elements Hotel. He questioned whether or not there would be enough demand to fill those beds.

Shugars added that maintaining public access to the river is very important. Once public access is gone, it's almost impossible to get back.

Philp said that the group will be sent a copy of the Low Hanging Fruit document [from the Our Town Planning Report] for further consideration.

Bennett said that she would love to see a boutique hotel on this side of Basalt to help provide more vitality for downtown.

Chase said it would be helpful to have three-dimensional representations of possible building scenarios.

Terwilliger said that people who voted for Option 2 may have voted for a less dense option, had that been a choice on the survey.

Next Meeting

Philp noted that the last two agenda items hadn't been addressed yet but she wanted to honor the established time commitment and since it was already 5:30 she asked the group if they wanted another meeting. The committee members decided that they would like to meet next Thursday, October 23rd.

Jim Kent said that the drawing boards submitted in the first phase of Our Town Planning should be posted. That would be helpful.

Guy suggested that the boards be posted at the next meeting so the group can discuss the plans that were submitted.

It was agreed that Staff will look into the possibility of meeting in the Community Room at the library in order to accommodate all of the idea boards.

The meeting was adjourned.