

Downtown Area Advisory Committee (DAAC)
November 6, 2014
Basalt Town Council Chambers, 4:00 to 5:30 p.m.

Present: Steve Chase, Gerry Terwilliger, Julie Kolar, Charlie Cole, Tracy Bennett, Greg Shugars, Chris Touchette, Chris Lane, Cathy Click, Ted Guy

Staff: Mike Scanlon, Susan Philp, Denise Tomaskovic

Moderator: Paul Andersen

1. Roll Call – see above

2. Approve October 30th meeting notes

M/S Chase and Terwilliger to approve the minutes of October 30, 2014 as read. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Discussion – DAAC meeting schedule and final report

In response to the question of adding more meetings, some of the committee members noted the dates they would be absent in November and into the beginning of December.

Whether or not to add more meeting dates kind of depends on how detailed the final report is expected to be.

Discussion then turned to what the report is supposed to look like. It was suggested that the report be tied to the five guiding principles. The Town can provide a framework with the committee providing the commentary. The report needs to be the committee's work, not the Town's.

Cole was of the opinion that the five guiding principles don't necessarily coincide with Option 2 or the eight issues presented in JKA's Our Town Planning report that came from the Citizen Center activity and the chat sessions. We're supposed to put meat on the bones of Option 2. Philp reminded the group that the initial dot exercise supported recommendations included in the JKA report. For example the importance of rivers is reflected in the first two principles as developed by Touchette and all of the committee members agreed that density was a key to successful implementation.

Click said that some of the confusion may arise from not knowing whether the committee members should be designing or coming up with recommendations for a means to an end.

Everybody is bringing different viewpoints and perspectives to the process. The committee needs to get an idea on programming before any designing is attempted. The intention should become more clear as we go through the process.

Designing building envelopes should be the most detailed as this process gets. Suggesting the number of stories with a range of use types per building would be helpful for developers. The envelope could be purchased and built according to options arrived at through the programming exercise.

Terwilliger said he has some ideas he wants to present and others may want to present ideas, too. Andersen suggested meeting with Staff to get that on the agenda.

Lane said that decisions regarding whether to build, where to build, and when to build need to be determined. He hoped the programming exercise will help with this.

4. Kolar's programming exercise

Kolar explained the background for the exercise she developed. Not all items on the list of ingredients need to be used. She explained the color key and offered to place her representations first. She then invited the other committee members to jump in with their choices. The goal is to start a conversation.

After the exercise, Kolar noted the items of interest that were the most apparent: the density on Clark's Market parcel, where retail/restaurant activities should be located, cultural activities, the amount of park space that is desired, and having non-profit organizations and education opportunities placed next to each other. On the map they were located by RMI.

Committee members explained the reasons for their choices. The revitalization corridor will be where existing business uses are located. Some uses are meant to be stacked on top of each other.

Bill Maron noted that the exercise reflects what the Our Town Planning process results showed.

Lions Park seems to warrant more discussion since there are conflicting uses noted. Arts and artist/craft spaces could combine affordable housing with the Community Arts Center. A lot of park space is starting to open up. The pedestrian experience and draw to the river are very important.

Trees can be limbed up to permit more site lines to the river.

Let's take a closer look at where the lodging goes. A bottom floor could have a coffee shop and restaurant with lodging on top floors. Landscaping along the river will also hide some of the potential river views.

What goes in the foreground will indicate to people where they're supposed to go to see what's happening (the there-there). The views to the river can then open from that point.

Further discussion of where lodging should be located. A hotel on Clark's Market would be only two blocks from RMI and the Conservancy.

Where would RFTA stops go? We don't want to lose sight of that necessity. If a shuttle service comes into being, those vehicles need to use the bus stops.

Time check – agree to go to 5:45 p.m.

Next was Touchette's sketching exercise incorporating the guiding principles overlaid on the base drawing. Touchette explained his iterations. He hasn't placed a building on the Midland Avenue and Two Rivers Road corner because it would block the view of the river as it goes downstream. He noted that among other things we need some type of public restroom for people to use as they come off the river, perhaps connected with stand-up paddle boarding/kayak rental shops.

Click noted that as a Midland Avenue business owner, we need to remember that part of the purpose is to draw people to Midland Avenue, too. It's the historic locus.

Midland Park across the river will have park activity opportunities, too. We need to keep parks scaled to the size of Basalt. Park-like areas are in place along the river all the way down to the sewer plant.

Private partners need to be able to make their projects pencil out and they're the ones who will be developing these parcels.

Andersen said that there will be another session on the 13th to further discuss the process and the DAAC will meet with the Basalt Town Council on November 20th. Committee members were encouraged to bring their own specific ideas to the next meeting. Andersen said that he has photos taken recently from Buena Vista and Salida riverfront development that he'd like to include.

6. Public Comment

Michael McVoy had a letter to the DAAC from individual private property owners regarding the spaces depicted on the map as the white parcels – mostly located in Basalt Center Circle. He read the letter aloud to the Committee and then passed out copies of the letter to those present.

Then, speaking on behalf of the Community Development Corporation (CDC), McVoy announced that the CDC has reached an agreement to sell its property to a development partner with lots of experience in the valley, Lowe Enterprises. Jim DeFrancia and Skip Behrhorst of Lowe have been attending the meetings and listening to the Committee's discussions. They look forward to future joint discussions about redevelopment options.

DeFrancia distributed some brochures and said that Lowe is heavily engaged in resort lodging development. They're not interested in building retail or commercial space, but building a boutique hotel seems to be a natural fit on the property adjacent to RMI. They are taking a closer look at the economics of what that would entail. AH will be part of their proposal, however that ends up shaking out. Lowe is looking forward to working with the Town and will be starting immediately. They have a broad array of experience and hope to bring that to bear in the process.

There was no further public comment.

The meeting adjourned.