

Downtown Area Advisory Committee (DAAC)
November 13, 2014
Basalt Council Chambers, 4:00 to 5:30 p.m.

Agenda Item 1: Roll call

Roll Call: Gerry Terwilliger, Chris Lane, Steve Chase, Chris Touchette, Cathy Click, Charlie Cole, Ted Guy, Julie Kolar

Staff Present: Mike Scanlon, Susan Philp, Denise Tomaskovic

Moderator: Paul Andersen

An incomplete list of the public signing in for this meeting is attached.

Agenda Item 2: Approve meeting notes of November 6, 2014

M/S Guy and Chase to approve the meeting notes of November 6, 2014 as read. The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 3: Presentations

- **Paul Andersen – Parks and Development in Buena Vista and Salida**
- **Gerry Terwilliger’s river park plan**
- **Other DAAC visions, plans, discussion**

Andersen didn’t have his laptop computer with him so said he’ll give his presentation next time.

Terwilliger presented his ideas for the Pan and Fork (P&F) parcel (see attached) which primarily revolved around the need for a place where people come together, e.g. for River Days. He presented size comparisons of other local community parks – Sopris Park in Carbondale, Arbaney Park in Basalt, Wagner Park in Aspen – to the P&F parcel. He included photos he’d taken of other park amenities such as picnic shelters, band shells, basketball and tennis courts, playground equipment, and restrooms. In addition to park activity structures, there needs to be room to run around. He’d like to make sure photovoltaic lighting is part of the plan.

Committee members had no questions for Terwilliger but comments were offered. There has been a lot of idea gathering and many of the desired elements could be accommodated on the P&F parcel, including some things that at first appear to be at odds with each other, if they are done thoughtfully.

Committee member Greg Shugars arrived.

The park needs to have a variety of activities that appeal to a broad range of ages and that both residents and visitors would enjoy. Also, there needs to be activities for all seasons, not just the summer months.

Committee member Tracy Bennett arrived.

Some of the comments made during the ensuing discussions included:

This is all fine and good for a park, but where is the revitalization piece for the downtown area?

(Comments continued)

There is no shortage of playing fields and swing sets in Basalt and the mid-valley.

Kolar provided an inventory of parks in Basalt and the surrounding area (see attached).

Whatever else it may have to do, the Town shouldn't have to buy any property from the CDC in order to maintain access to the river. We've already paid a ton of money to relocate the former mobile home park residents and get the property into buildable condition. The Town has done its part.

Active vs. passive uses in the park needs to be part of these discussions.

It'd be nice to have basketball hoops/volleyball court available for young professionals during lunch or after work.

Connectivity as shown in the POST Master Plan is very important. Allowing buildings or a hotel along Two Rivers Road [on the P&F parcel] would limit access to the river. Having more open space than buildings would ultimately be more beneficial to residents and visitors. The goal from the POST Master Plan regarding the Pan and Fork river park is to provide an opportunity for the community to engage with the river.

If Lowe Enterprises wants to come to Basalt perhaps they could buy Bob Ritchie's property and turn that into a hotel or some other viable concern. If we build a hotel on the CDC site we'll lose some access to the river.

Looking at it another way, having a nice hotel on the CDC parcel could be a benefit to the entire valley by providing a venue for local residents, as well as visitors, to hold family reunions, weddings, and other life celebrations. There is an opportunity to have a really nice facility for everyone to use.

The Town owns 2.7 acres, some of which is the riverbed and under water. The park area along the river that's currently being shaped should be big enough for people to run around. Some of the park area will be wetlands and there is a stream and pond near the wetland. There's not enough area for a ball field there but a band shell and natural play area, along with fishing access, are being considered.

We have to remember that the Town doesn't own the CDC parcel. The owners will ultimately decide what happens on that property. We need to develop a level of comfort with where we think buildings and access areas should be located and those recommendations must be arrived at soon – that's the job of this committee. The Town owns Lions Park and the committee has much more say about what could/should happen there than on the privately owned parcels. The Clark's Market parcel also needs to have more discussion.

The report is due soon; at some point we need to make a decision. The decision most likely won't be unanimous but we need to take a stand. To do so, we need to make the most basic decision – yes or no to development on the CDC parcel?

Open space equals revenue. That may not feel real tangible sometimes, but it's there. If there's a hotel, what type of boundary will be placed around it? Any type of boundary will cut into river access areas.

In response to a question, Philp said that the parcel is currently zoned for mobile homes, which have all been removed. The parcel needs to be rezoned but what that rezoning will be is partially dependent on this process.

(Comments continued)

Connectivity to the river is the most important item. Development done really well with great connectivity is the goal. If you think about Gold Rivers Court, nobody likes it [as a redevelopment model] because of the lack of public access to the river. We're not going to let that happen again.

A question about the purchase price of the CDC parcel came up but was deferred to a following meeting.

Andersen said he's invited Lowe Enterprises representatives Behrhorst and DeFrancia to the next meeting. He added that he's also invited the Clark's Market property owners [who signed the letter read by McVoy at last week's DAAC meeting] to next week's meeting. There are a number of decisions that will need to be made.

Andersen suggested that the committee address how it wants to handle making decisions. Will there be a basic majority rule vote or some other procedure? A suggestion was made to create both a majority and minority report, since this will most likely be the way things play out. The DAAC members hoped that the Town Council wouldn't be expecting singularity in its recommendations.

The question was asked whether or not POST members had unanimous decisions on what was included in the POST Master Plan. Kolar replied that the decisions on what went into the report were unanimous, with connectivity, in all its forms, being the overarching theme.

It was pointed out that the Option Two drawing includes a portion that could be covered by a building footprint, with the remaining part being open/providing access to the river. Let's return to the simplicity of Option Two and determine what percentage of the CDC parcel would be acceptable for building footprints and how much of it should remain unencumbered by structures.

Andersen noted that the key piece that's been missing up until now is the free market element. However, they'll be available for the next session. Is the committee willing to wait on this item until after they've talked with property owners? The committee members agreed to do so.

We need to start working on our report. We can be thinking about what that should include while listening to the free market representatives at next week's meeting.

Agenda Item 4: Discuss Clark's Area

Considering that the Clark's Market area property owners will be present at the next meeting, what would we like to see regarding redevelopment options? Are we limited to just the area depicted in white?

The consensus of the Committee was that the area should be expanded to include the Aspenalt Hotel as well as the property that goes down to the Fryingpan River.

Andersen said that Nick Aceto from Terrain [landscape architect and design] had submitted his comments, which include ideas about this parcel and the document will be emailed to the group (see attached).

Discussion centered around the possibility of locating a Performing Arts/Civic Center with a couple levels of parking on the Clark's Market parcel. The suggestion was made to also have mixed use commercial with residences along Two Rivers Road.

(Comments continued)

In response to a question, Philp said that ground water is a definite consideration but shouldn't be a deal breaker on this parcel.

The Clark's market building owner just owns the building footprint while the parking area is owned by the commercial owners' association. In reality we're probably looking at a 30 year plan for this parcel.

It's also been said that if the Aspenalt, Clark's Market and Decorative Materials owners could agree on a vision, the parking would go along with it.

In looking at other successful business areas, it's been shown that there needs to be active commercial/retail on the ground floor on both sides of a street, in this case, Two Rivers Road. We may need to re-align the roads completely through this area.

Building a two-story parking garage would be expensive but it would make the most sense for a central public parking facility in an area with the highest amount of density. Then, work outward from that center. Perhaps we can think about having some of that density spill over to the east side of the Lions Park parcel.

Agenda Item 5: Review of Amended Sketch 2 w/updates from 11/6 meeting and further ideas from Julie's exercise and Chris's drawings.

The Option Two depiction of Clark's Market parcel lends itself to a Tanglewood scenario with part of the seating area inside and part of it outside with the stage in the middle. The current programmed PAC vision is a building of about 30,000 sq. ft. while the white area currently depicted on the map is about 80,000 sq. ft. If we expand the white area then almost certainly other uses could also be accommodated on that parcel.

What types of uses should there be on Lions Park? Should Lions Park connect to the Pan and Fork parcel or to Clark's Market, or both? The Town needs to decide what it's going to do with Two Rivers Road to make it more pedestrian-friendly.

Kolar read the uses suggested for the Lions Park parcel from the last meeting. She noted that roads can also be eliminated or re-aligned to increase pedestrian connectivity.

The big challenge is that Lions Park is in a hole. If left in its current condition, this would make it difficult to incorporate with the other parcels and hard to create seamless connections with other activities. Also, there are wonderful trees in Lions Park that should be preserved.

So, what are the options for Town Hall? Send it up Midland Avenue to River Walk. Is this realistic? Yes! The committee agreed that repurposing Lions Park and moving government up the street should be in the report.

Would it be possible to bifurcate Lions Park to put AH on the west side of the parcel (include the former recycle center). Could we get rid of Midland Spur or realign it to help make this happen? This would be a good place for a building two to three stories high.

We need to remember that the Farmers Market requires street access, loading and unloading areas, and electricity. Also, it should be close to or adjacent to the existing retail/commercial on Midland Avenue.

(Comments continued)

There was some concern about how RFTA buses would move through this area (turning radius on corner) and where the bus stops should be located.

Andersen noted that there seemed to be collective thought on the Clark's Market and Lions Park parcels. Building placement on the CDC parcel doesn't have to look like what's been shown on Option Two. There can be a more natural flow if the corner of Midland Avenue and Two Rivers Road is left open.

I love trees but I wouldn't want the existence of the trees in Lions Park to stymie the process of its redevelopment.

Agenda Item 6: Next steps

Things are starting to come together. More discussion is necessary with property owners, and that will happen at next week's meeting.

The Committee agreed to ask for a revised map that includes a larger white space. Let's assume that all things are possible and we can get whatever we need to come up with the best solutions.

Agenda Item 7: Plan meeting on Nov. 20th with property owners (Lowe and Clark's Market area)

This was addressed earlier in the meeting.

Agenda Item 8: Public comment

Bill Maron, speaking as a citizen (not a Town employee), agreed with many of the things that have been said. However, he noted, the Committee seems to be buying the same real estate two or three times. Some of these ideas have already been looked at and are underway. He suggested that the Committee begin with the end in mind, firmly establishing where it is now.

Nick Aceto said that he strongly felt that the Committee needs to focus on the public space. In his opinion, the most powerful aspect of the plan is the street/road network – look at the 'woonerf' which is a concept that's been done in Europe for hundreds of years. Andersen said he will send Aceto's comments to the Committee via email.

To recap, Staff noted the meeting schedule revisions: meet on Nov. 20th with property owners (without the Town Council). Then at the next meeting on December 4th the Committee will present its recommendations to both the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Basalt Town Council at the library.

The Committee adjourned.