

# Meeting Minutes, Boulder Town Planning Commission

## July 14, 2016

Commissioners present: Loch Wade, Alyssa Thompson, Tabor Dahl, and Carla Saccomano. Also present: Pete Benson, Town Council Liaison; Peg Smith, Sec.; and Gladys LeFevre, Farlan and Mary Behunin, Steve Cox, Bill Muse.

Loch called the meeting to order at 7: 14 p.m. Carla moved to accept the June 9 minutes, Tabor seconded and all approved.

### ***General Plan Timeline and Ideas***

Loch introduced the topic of the General Plan update, last revised in 2013. It's not required, but recommended that the General Plan be updated every five years. Loch and Alyssa attended a seminar in May, session presented by Ken Wood, private consultant. This is a recap of what they learned at that meeting:

The General Plan is the guiding document for the future growth and development of a community. It documents what the town wants to be in the future. It's the source document on which all decision concerning the community should be based. It's required by the state for all entities that make land use decisions at of any nature. All that's actually required is a Land Use section and Transportation section for our town size. No decision by the Planning Commission or Town Council should be made without referring to the General Plan. Unless people refer to it frequently, it's easy to drift away from what it says. It guides the growth you want and limits the growth you don't want.

A good General Plan is both comprehensive yet concise; it's user-friendly and easy to read, with lots of graphs, charts, and tables

- It has clearly stated goals and actions for reaching those goals
- It has a Planning Map that contains where future commercial development, streets, housing, etc. would go.

In addition to the required sections, it can include other information that gives a sense of the community, such as economic development, how the plan was created, town culture, etc.

How to update: it's helpful to have joint Town Council/Planning Commission backing and training meetings, but important to also set up a citizen's advisory committee; focus group visioning (facilitated); community visioning workshops (facilitated); open house and public hearings; community survey--- all ways to achieve. It's important that the community in general has a stake in the final document, to feel that it reflects them, and wasn't handed to them.

Issues determine the goals, goals determine the strategies, strategies determine the actions. The Plan has to have actions spelled out that help guide the way to meeting goals. When something comes to us with an idea we look at the General Plan to first determine if that request meets community goals.

The community comes up with the ideas; we translate the stated goals into the more specific action points. For example, the community might be concerned with too much housing development. The goal is to preserve agricultural lands and open space. The strategies could be to use zoning restrictions, farming incentives, and innovative housing solutions. The actions could be to keep the five-acre minimum and expand small lot sizes in the town center, and adopt

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a town policy for seeking innovative housing solutions for the people who live here. Wherever we identify an issue, we try to match that concern with goals, strategies, and actions in the General Plan.

Some strategies for identifying issues:

- Worries and wishes. Groups discuss and see where the two things connect.
- SWOT. Small groups list strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats in columns, then share results.
- Mapping. Draw land use ideas to identify areas, roads, trails, etc. Collect ideas and see agreement/disagreement, different ideas.

Ways to work to identify goals:

- Post-its, stars on ideas, vision statements, photos of what they like and what they don't like; budget fantasy. \$5 million and all must be spent. Ideas are shared.
- Six colored thinking hats. People literally wear different hats and exchange hats. White hat is just objective. Yellow hat is just positive, Black hat is just the problems, Red hat is only about feelings, green hat is about creativity and outside the box thinking, blue hat is the facilitator. Designed to pull feelings and ideas out to be expressed. Then you switch hats.

We feel we would benefit from someone who does this for a living, to help bring out the information we need. Loch said he left the seminar feeling a professional facilitator would be worth the money. It would be way better to end up with a General Plan that actually works.

Survey: once community goals are determined, then do the survey to determine extent of public buy-in. 10-minute survey. Analysis and results interpreted. Use to fine-tune the goals and actions.

Loch and Alyssa got together to start determining a process plan. If we start now, we'll be completed in two years. We're on schedule! September –another joint meeting with Springdale planners and their recent experience on updating their own GP. October—form TC/PC steering committee. December—Setup citizen's advisory committee

2017: March/April—Train Citizens' Advisory Board; May-July—community meetings; June - develop survey, August Conduct survey; October interpret; December finished draft of General Plan

2018: April public hearing series; June final published copy.

Alyssa said the last one General Plan cost approx \$7K with everything done in house. What we have not is very good at stating facts about what Boulder is now, and it has good definition of some goals, but there aren't strategies or actions associated with most of the goals. Those would need to be reviewed and added or updated. And we need the Planning Map. Alyssa said she too was impressed with the seminar panelists who said in every decision they make they refer back to their General Plans. Their plans are specific enough to provide guidance. Bill said we have maps. Yes, we have a zoning map of what exists. We need planning maps showing the direction we're going. Things can change, but it helps when someone comes with a proposal to rezone something. Our map might provide the guidance by showing where we wanted development (or not), and allow us to not be tied to their plan, not ours.

Bill: Lack of interaction breeds discontent. We have facilitators sitting in this room. I don't want to spend that kind of money for a facilitator. Pete said the issue is that everyone has.

Alyssa: (regarding costs) The last GP had the survey analysis done by Justin Fischer, county planner. If he isn't available, we would have that additional expense.

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Loch: We're not critical of the current GP. It's worked for us so far. We just want to make it better. What a facilitator would do is bring out of the community what they think while making the process fun and participatory.

Gladys: If you have a facilitator and get the ideas out, we can put it into the language. We can ask Bruce Parker to help us out or use resources with Utah League of Cities and Towns to help.

Alyssa: Springdale—it's a town with 400 people with 3 million visitors per year. They house all their seasonal workers in a small land area. Springdale is not Boulder. But they are happy to come over in August or early September to share their experiences and their professional perspectives. I propose part of the \$5K be spent on bringing them in.

Carla: Facilitators direct the flow of conversation. We'd use them to help with the analysis of things. The current plan is really good and identifies what's important, but we need someone to help analyze the information from the community.

Loch: It would be good for people to see the town government bodies working together. Citizens' Advisory would come to the Steering committee (TC and Planning Commission) if they need guidance. The CAB would be the ones setting up the meetings and be the public face of the revision process. Show that it's the community's project. The more community buy-in the better.

Steve said he'd like to hear what the Springdale planners say. It would be useful to have them look at ours, but also talk about their process.

### ***Upcoming business for September 8 meeting***

- Accessory dwelling unit discussion
- Finalize Springdale planner meeting
- Discuss upcoming business

Alyssa moved to adjourn, Tabor seconded, motion carried. Loch adjourned the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

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Peg Smith, Planning Commission Clerk

Date