

Meeting Minutes

Boulder Town Planning Commission

May 8, 2008, 8:00 p.m.

Commissioners present: BJ Orozco, Ray Gardner, Elaine Roundy, and Brian Dick. Mike was absent. Also present were Peg Smith, clerk; and Curtis Oberhansly, Planning Coordinator. Members of the public present included Walt Gove, Don Montoya, Sergio Femenias, Ashley Coombs, and Scott Brodie.

Brian opened the meeting at 8:08 p.m.

General Plan Discussion

Brian read through the final additions proposed at the April 24 work meeting, then suggested that the General Plan was at a point where it could be passed along to the Town. Curtis suggested using Bruce Parker for final, professional input before final approval to recommend to the Town Council. BJ moved to pass the General Plan through to Bruce Parker, and Ray seconded the motion. All approved.

Other Business

The second item of business was to approve the April 10 minutes. BJ moved to approve them as written, Elaine seconded the motion, and all approved.

Brian suggested proposing an alternate to sit in as Planning Commissioner during his absence to better assure a quorum. He said he would try to talk to the mayor about this proposal.

Scott Brodie asked to discuss the newly-posted SITLA Request for Proposal (RFP) on bids for the SITLA property within south Boulder Town limits. The Commission agreed to discuss the topic, but cautioned that it could not take any official action since the item was not on the agenda. (The Planning Commission maintains a 10-day cutoff of agenda topics prior to each meeting in order to ensure sufficient time for study before a meeting.) Scott then distributed a packet to the Commissioners containing assembled materials on the SITLA situation. First, he said he thought the mayor had requested a letter from the Planning Commission to SITLA stating how some of the development ideas on that land might conflict with existing land use regulations. Second in the packet was the letter stating the town's desire to work a land exchange. Third, in 2004, the western parcel of the SITLA land came into play because of the access issue at that time, and a letter had been written at that time discussing this. Fourth, Mark Austen had written a letter that listed ordinances in conflict with development on that land. Scott said that Judi has a file of all letters and other documents that were accumulated on this topic over the years. The last letter sent to SITLA from the town was dated November 16, 2007.

Within the past week, SITLA has released its RFP accepting bids on its parcel(s) of land within Boulder Town limits, with a July 31 deadline. BJ asked about a proposed land trade. Scott said the BLM had looked at some potential trade pieces that might be more beneficial for SITLA.

A discussion ensued regarding the realistic potential for trade----some thought the timeframe on the RFP precludes trying to start up a complicated trade negotiation at this point---and that the RFP specifically rejects the Federal Government as being a third party in a bid.

Walt asked if there is anything the town can now do. Answer: submit the proposal to SITLA's RFP; that's the only thing SITLA would respond to. Whether Boulder Town wishes to buy, lease, enter a joint venture, propose a conservation transaction, or any other option, it has to submit a proposal to be in the game. Possible alternatives need to be identified, along with stating that some of the information within the RFP exceeds or conflicts with certain town ordinances, such as slope restriction.

Curtis suggested a multi-pronged set of actions: Pursue the trade idea, if the committee can identify a parcel, but don't just assume SITLA is prepared to wait. Consider holding a public hearing regarding public lands within Boulder town limits. Respond to the RFP, identifying alternatives that the Town Council is willing to talk about in the next 3-4 months; merely saying we want SITLA to trade won't be as effective as specifying a trading partner and a specific piece of ground that the BLM has already designated for "disposal." Finally, it doesn't cost anything to try to talk with Chris and Brock. Curtis said he could call them and try to determine their plans. Scott said he could call Lou Brown to find out how imminent the requirement to sell is and find out if there any option for delay. Don said he would check on EIS and archeological surveys of the area. Curtis and Peg agreed that a letter should be drafted similar to Mark Austin's letter of thee or four years ago (in Scott's packet) that discusses the development potential of the three parcels and the potential each has of serious conflict with certain town ordinances.

Next meeting is June 12.

Elaine moved to close to meeting, BJ seconded the motion, and Brian adjourned the meeting at 9:30 p.m.

Margaret Smith, Planning Commission Clerk Date

Approved: _____ Date: _____