

MINUTES TO BE APPROVED AT JUNE PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

Boulder Planning Commission Regular Meeting

April 12th, 2024 9:00 AM

Meeting Minutes

Planning Commission Members present- Tina Karlsson, Elena Hughes, Colleen Thompson, Nancy Tosta, Darrel Fuller

Town staff present or on Zoom- Town Clerk Jessica LeFevre, Deputy Clerk Lacy Allen, Zoning Administrator Erin Smith

Meeting was called to order at 9:00 am.

Commissioner Karlsson opened the meeting by stating that this meeting is to debrief on what was discussed at the forum on April 11th, 2024, and what questions the Planning Commission might have for Lee to move forward. She then called for comments & questions from Lee to start and then from the commission.

Lee Nellis commented that attendance was great, and the topic was complex and he felt there was positive feedback from Town Council members and the town. Now is the time to ask what the Planning Commission wants to move forward with.

Commissioner Hughes commented she likes the average lot sizes that has already passed. She personally doesn't love the transfer of development rights as it potentially adds more development that otherwise would not happen. She thinks rewards or incentives for development seem more favorable.

Commissioner Fuller said he thought it was a great forum. Transfer of development rights is interesting and asked a question from an attendee is if you can tweak the transfer of development rights to places that aren't so open and have more clustered housing and are unsure if that is something that could be added into the language.

Commissioner Thompson commented that it was great to learn what the definitions are, but she would like to see what happens in Boulder on its own in the next couple of years. It's hard to imagine what the future looks like and she is curious how the subdivision ordinance will affect the town. She stated people feel that there isn't a way out of this with the price of land being what it is. People are looking for a return on their money. Properties are investments to make money and there are so many things involved in this.

Commissioner Tosta Stated she wasn't sure how representative the forum was of the community. Question of affordable housing... every community is dealing with it. It is a market issue. There are no quick solutions. She would like to see work on the general plan because that vision shapes the community.

Commissioner Karlsson suggested everyone read through the general plan and suggested a discussion. Water resources need clarification. Transfer of development rights might make better use of space for residential areas.

Commissioner Hughes stated she was pleased with the diversity of who showed up. She mentioned diversifying the groups. Commissioner Fuller and Thompson agreed.

Commissioner Karlsson then asked Lee to comment.

Lee thought the vibe was positive and no meeting is a full representation. This subject has been a conversation for a long time and it is time to take action. The subdivision regulations are going to happen, so they don't need to be worried about it. Roads will need to be discussed and agreed upon. Can the agricultural land be protected and can Boulder be maintained as affordable? If there is a standard written and there are guidelines regarding where lots can be transferred. Gentle & mild incentives could be used. Lee discussed further options and ideas in which incentives could be used and suggested that the Planning Commission just see what happens.

Commissioner Karlsson then asked for everyone to speak as to what incentives they think would be useful.

Commissioner Hughes mentioned a bonus that can be awarded for subdividing affordable lots. She mentioned transfer of development rights has the potential to increase property value even further. It could also cause more development.

Commissioner Fuller commented there would be support for Transfer of Development rights in certain areas of Boulder. Duplexes seem to be a favorable option. Is there a way to incentivize people by offering a greenhouse option or options to help improve land?

Commissioner Thompson asked how they can create incentives that aren't monetary. She stated she liked Commissioner Fuller's comment.

Commissioner Tosta stated that duplexes and triplexes would be a simpler option and would create a lot of housing and could be affordable. She would advocate for these as a solution and should be allowed in any single-family zone. She mentioned Transfer of Development Rights are complicated and it would be a much more complex step.

Commissioner Karlsson was curious about incentivizing people with an extra lot and wanted to come up with a list of what they may want to work on going forward.

Commissioner Hughes asked if Transfer of Development Rights could only be transferred if it's a developable lot. One of her fears is that it opens it up to the next set of richest homeowners. There needs to be an assurance that protections on affordable lots are made.

Lee Nellis asked if he should write a list based on the present conversation. He stated incentives need to be tied to affordability. He will make a list and tie them all to affordability.

Commissioner Tosta commented that the topic of what is affordable will need to be discussed.

Lee Nellis commented that the town cannot dictate the deals, but they can make it possible for people to feel rewarded for their generosity.

Commissioner Karlsson asked about restrictions on the properties and the ideas of “picking their neighbors”. She stated that the division needs to go beyond our lifetime.

Commissioner Karlsson thanked everyone and Lee Nellis thanked everyone.

Commissioner Karlsson opened public discussion.

Mark Nelson said that he had a lot of disagreements with the forum. He mentioned he didn't like Lee's suggestion to just start by trying. Mark said a lot of these steps are irreversible.

Jen Bach likes that “affordable” is part of the conversation. Affordability might not be attainable, but it is a good goal to shoot for. Duplexes do not mean affordability.

John Veranth thanked everyone for their efforts. He thought there were a lot of great comments. He mentioned roads and access on SB 174. What is put into the new subdivision rules regarding road access could either shut down development or open it up. Incentives should be generous so that they are used.

Meeting adjourned.