

**TOWN OF BASALT  
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION  
WORK SESSION, REGULAR MEETING and PUBLIC HEARING  
Tuesday, June 4, 2019**

**P&Z Work Session**

Commissioners present included Joan Keefe, Bill Maron, Bernie Grauer, Eric Vosick, and Alternate Tracy Bennett.

Council Members present included Jacque Whitsitt, Ryan Slack and Jennifer Riffle.

Staff members present included Ryan Mahoney, Town Manager; Susan Philp, Town Planner; James Lindt, Assistant Planning Director, and Sara Nadolny, Staff Planner.

Master Plan Consultants present included Wayne Freeman and David Dixon of CTA, and Heather Henry of Connect One Design.

A sign-in sheet for public attending the meeting is available for review at Town Hall.

The Work Session began at 6:01 pm.

Philp explained this work session is an opportunity for CTA and Connect One to meet with the P&Z and Town Council and summarize the public outreach performed to date and outline the next steps for the project.

The attendees went around the table and made introductions.

Henry provided a tour of the LetsTalk.Basalt.net website. She explained this is a public engagement website built out of the gates to help get information out there during process, and accumulate information as it comes in. She said the website is built on a platform called Bang the Table, which is an input based program. The Team created the theme, graphics and feel of the site. Henry explained that LetsTalk.Basalt.net is a subdomain of and is linked through the Town's Basalt.net website. There are links on the LetsTalk.Basalt.net website to all promotion materials, flyers, banners. There are many opportunities to take the online survey. She explained that in order to take survey a user must create a registration, and there are limited things can be done without signing in. Henry showed the group the link users can click on to send a message to Planning Staff.

Henry continued with a discussion of the Engage page and explained this is where users can go for a deeper level of information. She showed the Survey link that is also found on this page, as well as the, also tag our map. Henry explained that users can tag a google map with suggestions on specific locations, such as where a sidewalk or crosswalk should be, or suggestions on what a key parcel should be developed as. Henry said that every place-oriented comment from the flags and sticky notes gathered from the first and second open houses and key parcel sticky notes have been added to the tag our map and color coded according to categories such a Place and Lifestyle.

Henry explained that the Consultants have summarized everything that was in each of the Open Houses posted on What You've Shared page. She said that the What We've Heard page

provides feedback from each of the events. Open House #2 had a storytelling session and word clouds were created. Henry said right now the Consultants are making judgement on what will be displayed on the webpage, but the information can be tailored as Town sees fit.

Henry showed the attendees the Hablemos.basalt.net page which is the LetsTalk.Basalt.net webpage translated fully into Spanish. Councilor Riffle voiced her appreciation for the Spanish translated site. Henry said that due to the lack of traffic on the Spanish webpage, the Consultant Team will be hosting a bar-b-que on Sunday June 23<sup>rd</sup> focusing on the Spanish speaking community. She said that the survey is very easy to take using a cell phone, and they will be encouraging taking the survey at the event.

Philp added that the Team held a neighborhood meeting at the school that was geared towards the Latino community, but did not get a lot of response or attendees. She said the bar-b-que would be held at the seed garden, at the Emma Bridge area.

Mayor Whitsitt asked if the Spanish radio station had been engaged. Henry replied that San Bernal at the radio station would be one of the primary stakeholders, along with English in Action. She said the Team has a number of avenues for getting the word out and is confident this will be a better attended event.

Chair Maron asked if the Spanish website was an automated translation from the English version. Henry replied that it was actually directly translated by Staff Planner Watkins Fulk-Gray.

Henry said that to provide some statistics, in the past thirty days the website has had 379 visits, 225 site registrations, and 141 activated participants. The Team has received 120 completed surveys so far.

Whitsitt inquired whether the Team had sent out paper surveys, and Henry responded no, and the team does not intend to at this time.

Mayor Whitsitt is concerned that without a paper survey to engage people who don't show up in person there will be people from the get go who do not buy in to the results, and who think the information is not valid.

Vosick questioned if the surveys responses provided by his high school classes counted as just one, and Henry explained they are all counted individually. She said that she received wonderful information from that group, and that boosted the data from that age-range demographic significantly. Henry said to reach the millennial population the Team is looking to have a pub crawl, hand out post cards on a Friday night and have them scan the QR code. She said its important to go to them to get their participation.

Councilor Riffle expressed concern that people don't want to create a username and password. She said she understands that we don't want same person taking the survey many times, however, constituents are expressing that the process for registration is too much. Henry pulled up the registration on the screen and showed those in attendance what registration looks like. The registration includes creating a username and password, and the asks the user to complete two demographic questions – age and where the user lives in Basalt. She said users are not spammed, and their information is not shared. Councilor Riffle said a statement should be included on the webpage that user information will not be shared.

Commissioner Vosick asked how long the survey would be open for. Henry responded the intent is to leave the survey open through the end of June. She indicated the Team is looking to get a very broad spectrum of survey responses versus focusing on a statistically valid survey. They are trying to get as many respondents as possible without doing a full mail survey.

Commissioner Grauer said that he would like to see level of confidence in the survey results and doesn't feel very confident given small numbers. He said he wants to see more participation in survey.

Freeman said in regard to the project scope, a lot of the initial public outreach component has been completed. The Team has been gathering and reading past plans, have had interviews with business owners and people on the street. Freeman said they're currently meeting with Town Staff and those from the Counties, and others who are affected by the Master Planning process. He said they met with the management at the Real America affordable housing project and got a sense of how they do business. They also met with Police Chief Greg Knott and gained a good understanding of what he deals with day to day.

Freeman said that on June 20<sup>th</sup> they are hosting a crash course on Affordable Housing which he sees as one of the top issues faced by Town. He said the intent is to come out of that event with strategies that are helpful to include as recommendations for the Master Plan.

Freeman said the next step is getting to the point where all of the input received is turned into real world solutions and for the Team to make recommendations to the boards.

Freeman continued that in terms of public meetings, the Team has hosted three major open houses. The first was a listening session at The Temporary which had a really good turnout. The second session was held at the High School and built on that information, where attendees were allowed to comment from blank slate but also the Team started asking clarifying questions. The third meeting was at RMI and the Team took a different approach. Freeman said they utilized a separate survey that tried to take information from major topics. He said the Team held five individual neighborhood planning sessions that resulted in a whole different level of discussion. Freeman said the community interaction was refreshing to see and the Consultants didn't have to do a lot of talking. They received good information at the workshops. He stated that one additional workshop was added that is funded by Pitkin County.

Freeman continued that so far the team has met with BACH, BPAC, and the Green Team committees.

Freeman said that the Team has created major categories from what was heard so far. He said in terms of density, in general people aren't afraid of this, and certain areas density is a palatable solution to growth. However, preservation of Open Space is desired at the same time.

Freeman said that respondents expressed interest in annexing islands of County land into the Town.

Dixon added that when you ask people if they want density they say yes, but it comes down to right sizing and right placing.

Chair Maron said they P&Z is seeing this now, and it feels like conflicting information in terms of the SkiCo housing project in Willits.

Councilor Slack said his sense is not that the project is too dense, it's how they're doing it.

Councilor Riffle stated the people just don't want dormitory housing.

Freeman said that parking ties into that issue, and they've heard that loud and clear throughout the process. He said the Team is trying to get the flavor how the community feels about specific issues.

Freeman continued to the topic of affordable housing, and said the Town is hyper-sensitive to it. He said the end goal is to try and see this from a regional perspective. He said that many people feel that affordable housing is Aspen's problem and they are pushing it down valley. Speaking with the Police Chief, Freeman said his staff has problems with having Affordable Housing, and unless he can get housing for Staff they will move away. The Town needs to address how to retain the heart and soul of the community, such as the police force, teachers, public works staff, etc.

Freeman stated that parking is a huge problem, both real and perceived. People gravitate to the idea of a circulator. He said there is a lot of low hanging fruit, such as dead-end sidewalks and streetscape issues that the Team will look to address in their recommendations.

Dixon stated that all of these things to be prioritized and planned out in a 10-15 year process. Freeman agreed and stated that the Master Plan must have those things that are easily implementable, broader, and then the bold. He said there are areas where the Town will need to step out of box and get creative, and that might make people uncomfortable.

In terms of vibrancy, Freeman said he heard the term "Town Proud", and he loves that word. He also heard that this is a town that needs to come together, that right now there are two or three different communities which is divisive. He stated that during Master Plan process the Team will work on ways to address that. He said that questions have been presented, such as does Basalt need more young people, or have a night life in old town? He said that no real strong solutions have presented yet, but as planners the consultants can step in and read the tea leaves to come up with recommendations to help vibrancy.

Dixon added that in the Master Planning process the goal is to see what's not working and change thinking, and people starting to understand trade-offs - If you push here it pulls there.

Freeman said that over and over its been shown that people embrace the rivers as a great asset. He said there is a balance that needs to occur to continue the feeling as a river town while providing opportunities to capitalize on this from a growth standpoint.

Freeman said he heard a lot of frustration about the Pan & Fork site, but once decision was made on the development there he has not heard about. He thinks it might be a relief that some level of decision has been made on that site, and believe this will be helpful in moving forward with Master Planning process.

Councilor Slack Affordable housing is an important issue, but there is also a jobs issue. Basalt is not affordable because we don't have high paying jobs.

Freeman said that people seem to understand there is room for government assistance in advancing the local economy. He was surprised there didn't seem to be a level of hesitancy he

thought might be there in helping local businesses compete and improve. He said this equates to TIF financing or other types of programs.

Councilor Slack said that the Town can make housing more affordable, but not all areas of life can be helped. For instance, gas is not affordable, food is not affordable.

Commissioner Keefe asked if there is a sliding scale for our core people having priority on affordable housing. Philp replied that the question of who should affordable housing be provided for was addressed in the survey included in packet. Philp replied that our deed-restrictions work differently for different projects; there is a priority system for rental units. Police and Fire are given first priority. Philp said that most of Basalt's affordable housing stock is now rental, such as 50 apartments at Willits Block 7, and 56 units at the Real America project.

Chair Maron questioned how the affordable housing qualifications are managed. Lindt replied that the process is handled in house, by the Planning Department. He said that for the Roaring Fork Apartments and Willits Seven project, the property manager does the initial qualification on potential tenants, and this information is provide to Town Staff to verify they meet requirements.

Council Riffle comments she would like to see more involvement in the process, and more advertising of the Master Planning. She said that getting more people involved is her greatest priority. She said she is seeing a few new faces at Open House meeting, but also lot of familiar faces.

Grauer questioned the decision not to do a scientific survey and suggested a phone survey should be performed to get a broader cross section of people for a big enough sample group.

Mahoney answered that the Town is working within a budget and we did not require a scientific survey during the procurement process. He noted he is seeing a whole lot of different methodologies to get people involved, and it would cost an additional \$30-50k to ensure a scientific survey. He suggested we see where we can get with the methods currently being utilized, noting that the Town doesn't have additional money to throw at the process. He encouraged the P&Z and Council to take a positive outlook until we get a little further down the road, and then we can do some easy course corrections as necessary.

Chair Maron said it is important the community feels that they had an adequate chance to provide input during the process. He said that during the Our Town Planning process people felt they were able to put feedback into the process.

Councilor Riffle suggested there may be additional outreach opportunities at the Basalt Sunday Market, pancake breakfast, etc.

Commissioner Keefe suggested providing more signage directing people to website, and place these in high traffic areas. Philp replied that we could use the Community message board for this purpose. Councilor Slack asked if we could use the CDOT variable message board, but Philp replied we no longer have access to that sign.

Councilor Riffle stated that googling Basalt Master Plan survey doesn't take you there. Councilor Slack responded that no one is googling the Master Plan survey.

Henry stated they've been on the public radio station, KDNK, quite a bit, and had an interview earlier that day.

Commissioner Bennett said it feels like the Team has done a phenomenal job in getting the work out in a number of ways.

Commissioner Grauer stated that the next step is to weave together data points to make a convincing case that the community was reached.

Philp said that Katie Schwoerer was unable to make the meeting, but she passed along some thoughts to read. She wants the Master Plan to address climate change, lack of water, and that we will see more fires in the future, and we need to incorporate this into our thinking about the Master Plan.

Chair Maron observed that compared to the process last time, this is a whole new realm of community outreach, stating time we are reaching out in multiple ways and people are showing up.

Freeman said he understands that part of frustration is the information is being presented at the exact point in time where there hasn't been a complete summary of the data as of yet. He said over all they are happy with the amount and diversity of responses. Freeman noted Basalt is a very divided community but there are several areas where community comes together, such as affordable housing. He finds it to be divided more so than most communities, but recognizes Basalt has a very highly educated population and many have lived here a long time. There are very strong opinions on both sides of many issues, and feels it is his job to collectively shape information into a path forward that makes it work for everyone.

Dixon agreed with Freeman and said there is less of a need to educate people on issues.

Commissioner Grauer stated he looks forward to weaving together the complex information, noting the people will read the Master Plan and know whether the consultant "got" the issues.

Chair Maron said that no one will agree to everything we do but thinks people will see a component of plan they had input on which will go a long way in making this an acceptable result.

Commissioner Keefe stated the result should be a confluence of ideas, just like the rivers. Chair Maron replied that some ideas may be in conflict with each other. He said the document is a tool for the Commission and Council to use to evaluate applications before them. That is what the use is. Come to a sense of where to put policy going forward.

The work session concluded.

## **CALL TO ORDER**

The Planning & Zoning Commission was called to order at 7:25 pm. Commissioners present were Bill Maron, Joan Keefe, Eric Vosick, Bernie Grauer and Alternate Tracy Bennett.

Staff present were Susan Philp, Town Planner; James Lindt, Assistant Planning Director; and Sara Nadolny, Staff Planner. A sign-in sheet for public attending the meeting is available for review at Town Hall.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**M/S GRAUER AND VOSICK TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MAY 4, 2019. MOTION CARRIED BY A VOTE OF 5 TO 0.**

## **AGENDA ITEMS**

### **Land Use Application Referral – Eagle County Land Use Regulation Process Improvement Amendment**

Staff Planner Sara Nadolny introduced herself and explained that Eagle County is making some changes to their Code. She said on May 30<sup>th</sup> she had to opportunity to attend a Roaring Fork Regional Planning Commission meeting at the Eagle County offices in El Jebel. Nadolny indicated that the majority of proposed amendments do not apply to the Town of Basalt, as they are related to processes and right-sizing application steps and timeframes.

Nadolny stated one particular item was important to Staff, which dealt with referral comments. She said that Eagle County often sends applications to the Town to review and provide referrals, per the Intergovernmental Agreement signed in 2008. Nadolny said currently the Town receives referral requests on Friday mid-afternoons, which begins the 21-calendar day clock for review. Eagle County Staff indicated they are working to change sending out referral requests to Wednesdays rather than Fridays.

Nadolny continued that currently the Eagle County Code calls this a 21-minimum day review period, which is being amended to a 21-maximum day review period to coincide with the County's interpretation of state statute. Staff has drafted the letter in the Commission's packet, which suggests the referral period be a 21-business day period rather than calendar days in order to allow more time for review by boards and various referral agencies. Staff is also requesting the referrals be provided to Staff on Mondays rather than the contemplated Wednesdays to aid in getting the referrals in front of boards as needed.

Nadolny noted the Eagle County Code is further being updated to come into compliance with the 2015 Telecommunications Act. She said this is something the Town of Basalt will also need to take a look at in the near future.

Nadolny indicated she had drafted the letter provided in the packet, but Philp had made a minor change that has been highlighted in yellow in the updated letter handed out by Nadolny at the meeting. She said the intent of the change was to make the language a bit less clunky. She said the change reads "Additionally, the Town asks Eagle County to provide referral requests to the Town of Basalt on Mondays rather than Wednesdays, if possible. This would provide additional opportunities for Basalt Staff to fully evaluate the application and schedule it on the

Basalt Planning and Zoning Commission or Town Council agenda for review.” She said this language doesn’t substantially change what was in the packet, but it does help the letter to read a bit easier.

Chair Maron said that some of Eagle County’s goals are vague, but those don’t matter to us. He said that the only thing he sees as mattering to us is the referral issue. Maron said this makes things clearer and easier for us. He wondered if we ask if they will actually make the requested changes. Philp replied it depends on what their attorney says. She noted we are a home rule community and so Basalt has a lot more flexibility on how things are done; and Eagle is a statutory County. She said we are working on building a better relationship with Eagle County Staff.

**M/S VOZICK AND BENNETT TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF REFERRAL LETTER TO EAGLE COUNTY, AS AMENDED. MOTION CARRIED BY A VOTE OF 5 TO 0.**

**Commissioner Comments and Planning Department Updates**

Lindt summarized what Council approved at Sketch Plan. Lindt handed out the site plan that Council approved for River Park Sketch Plan. He noted there are differences from what the P&Z had seen previously, which came out the Applicant’s negotiation with Council. Lindt handed out a color-coded plan and explained the changes according to the color.

River town homes/river cabins. Move to east building that is a horseshoe – this is the makers space office building. He said it is a mixed-use space intended for non-profit and office spaces. Lindt indicated the upper floor would be a mix of micro apartment and 2- or 3-bedroom apartments and would have tuck-under parking.

He indicated that further to the east, the building labeled as C is the ArtBase facility, and closer to park E building will be a restaurant with a patio building. Lindt said this use could active and enliven the park and Council felt to be a good concept.

Lindt indicated that the Basalt Chamber is still in discussions with their board to look at space in this development.

Lindt said that as part of restaurant/patio building there were negotiations with the Applicant about building public restrooms which resulted with these being combined with those for the restaurant use. Throughout process fire district worked out emergency services access.

Lindt explained the next step is for the Applicant to work on refining details and on a final plan application for the Town to look at, which will involve another round of P&Z and Council reviews.

Lindt confirmed there are a total of 24 housing units associated with the project. There are four affordable housing units averaging 1000 sf each, which is slightly under the 15% Code requirement. Lindt said the Applicant will be required to get to that 15% of the square footage. The Applicant will be putting on 1.5% RETA. He acknowledged that the free market units are small, but hopefully keep the prices lower by design.

Chair Maron noted that the thing that is nice about micro units is that the chance of those units becoming second homes is fairly small.



Philp stated that on June 26<sup>th</sup> at 3pm (Wednesday) there will be a charette with Master Plan Consultants to discuss planning for the park design. This will take place during the regularly scheduled POST meeting. She said that Connect One Design is the park design consultants.

Philp added that we have hired a new building official, Rick Fout, who previously worked for the City of Glenwood Springs. Chair Maron replied that he can't think of anyone better than Rick Fout for the position.

**M/S VOZICK AND GRAUER TO ADJOURN. MOTION CARRIED BY A VOTE OF 5 TO 0.**

The Planning and Zoning Commission adjourned at 7:48 pm.

TOWN OF BASALT  
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

By   
\_\_\_\_\_  
William Maron, Chair

Attest   
\_\_\_\_\_  
Susan Philp, Planning Director