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HISTORIC ADVISORY COMMISSION

Gilpin County Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes

May 12, 2020

The Gilpin County Planning Commission convened via Zoom Meeting; no physical meeting was held. A recording of this meeting is available at

Call to Order: Chair Jeney called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Quorum Call:

- Present: Chair Laura Jeney, Pro-tem Jim Wailes, Joe Marr, Andrea Wrobel, Shannon Arrington, Roxann Goss, Bob Haxel, David Sietsema, Dorothy Sweet
- Staff Present: Stephen Strohminger, Community Development Director, Tami Archer, Planner, Kristina Mahoney, Secretary

Agenda Review: Commissioner Marr moved to approve the agenda as presented and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Haxel. The motion passed unanimously. Discussion was had regarding the content of the presentation.

Minutes: The minutes from the April 14, 2020 meeting were considered for approval. Chair Jeney expressed concerns with the content, length, and editing of the meeting minutes. Community Development Director Strohminger confirmed the video recording of the meeting was posted on the website. It was suggested by Planner Archer to have the meeting minutes emailed to the Commission for the edits and additions they would like to see. Secretary Mahoney will make the recommended changes once obtained. Commissioner Marr motioned to table the approval of April 14, 2020 meeting minutes until edits could be made. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Arrington. The motion passed unanimously.

Old Business: Comprehensive Plan Update and Work Session

- **Existing conditions – County Character – Francois De Kock**
  - Defining features and characteristics
    - Majestic views of the mountain landscape and down valleys and creeks
    - Abundance of wildlife due to large areas of State and Federal managed parks
    - Rural lifestyle
    - History
    - People
    - Solace and Geography
    - Proximity to skiing in the mountains
    - Access to public lands
  - Issues + Needs

        - Fragmented land management due to dispersed public and private ownership is seen as an issue/need
        - Communication to all residents and getting them involved
        - Internet access
            - It was noted by Chair Jeney that during the Interagency Taskforce meeting there was not any representation telecommunication providers such as Century Link, Verizon, AT&T
                - Community Development Director Strohminger stated he reached out to Mountain Broadband and they declined to join the Taskforce
    - Opportunities
        - Through creative marketing efforts, promote Gilpin County as a desirable place to live
        - Make a profit through history of County
        - Regulation of billboards
        - Structures placed sensitively along roads so as not to block views
    - BHAG = Big Hairy Audacious Goals – if money was not an issue, what could be done
        - Land consolidation through land swap agreements
        - Communicating with the residents in a way that we gain buy in
        - High speed internet access for every resident

- **Natural Resources – Bill Mangle**
    - Defining features and characteristics
        - Ecological systems range from alpine tundra to montane forests and grasslands
        - These systems provide habitat for many wildlife species
        - Wetland, riparian and alpine tundra are most sensitive
        - Significant history with hard rock mining – primarily gold and silver – and a high potential for crushed stone aggregate
    - Issues + Needs
        - Fragmented landownership and management (an issue for fuels management and wildlife habitat management)
        - Look into mineral resource areas
        - Fuel/forest management/wildfire issues
        - Natural resource impacts not considered in planning process
    - Opportunities
        - Assess fuels management programs or implementation measures that make sense for the County
        - Willingness of largest public landowner (ARNF) to collaboratively manage habitat fragmentation, fuels management issues
        - Energy projects to capitalize on solar resource, take advantage of our mountainous geography for energy storage
    - BHAG's

        - Focus on natural resource protection measures in County planning processes and zoning codes, similar to Boulder County
        - Adoption of comprehensive fuels management and wildfire prevention, habitat fragmentation and wildlife habitat impact mitigation regulations/ ordinances/ codes for all land use types
        - Inclusion of ARNF representatives in County planning / permitting decisions
        - Pulling disparate plans into one comprehensive plan, list of literature collected from staff and interagency entities
        - No go preservation areas to protect fragile habitat areas and vegetation and animals at risk due to human activity

- **Market and Economics – Doug Jeavons**
    - Defining features and characteristics
        - Small and widely dispersed population
        - No established "central place" outside of the two cities
        - Economy heavily dependent on gaming and out-commuting
        - "Rural feel" highly valued by residents
    - Issues + Needs
        - Supply side limitations: Housing supply limited by availability of suitable land, water and wastewater service
        - Demand side limitations: Lack of basic services such as grocery stores, banks, health care facilities and restaurants (outside of cities) Few employment opportunities outside of gaming
        - Internet access
        - Need to diversity our economy, could create public private partnerships to use historic sites for local vendors
        - No sales tax
    - Opportunities
        - Unique and well-preserved history plus scenery and recreation opportunities draw visitors
        - Visitation likely to grow with metro population and increasing congestion on I-70
        - Fiscal revenues from gaming contribute to low taxes and reduce cost of living
        - Being able to work virtually
        - Being able to work within the county vs going to the metro area for work
        - No match federal grant available for $150 million to put broadband communication in Gilpin County
        - Work share temporary offices
    - BHAG's
        - Water and wastewater constraints overcome through "water bank" or augmentation plan and package treatment facilities and/or city annexations

        - Thoughtful, higher density development allows population growth suitable to attract and support local services
        - County develops infrastructure to cater to visitors and capitalize in jobs and revenues
        - Create special economic zone for commercial development.
        - Create lease program for county owned lands for commercial enterprises (small businesses)
        - Create 20-year plan to move slash yard and dirt yard away from limited prime real estate along 119 to allow for mid-county commercial opportunities
        - Diversified economy
        -

- **County Fiscal Position – Doug Jeavons**
    - Defining features and characteristics
        - Gaming revenues fund a substantial portion of the County budget
        - Some County expenditures, such as public safety, scale with the volume of gaming, but most services are resident driven
        - No County sales or lodging tax
        - Low property taxes
    - Issues + Needs
        - Budget subject to fluctuations in gaming revenues
        - Relatively tax-averse population
        - Corridor for commercial development is limited
        - Decrease in gaming revenue due to pandemic
        - School district funding if County-wide sales tax is passed
        - Adding residents dilutes gaming revenues
        - Gallagher Amendment results in limited property taxes from residences
        - Economic diversity, aside from gaming
    - Opportunities
        - Tap into current stream of tourists and visitors by offering limited services
        - Enhance County reserve to help weather gaming downturns
        - Tin Cup development
    - BHAG's
        - New economic driver that supports additional County revenues without changing character
        - Land consolidation through land swap agreements
        - Investment fund from gaming revenue to assist County in times of economic downturns such as Covid-19
        - Possible revenue stream from sales tax on internet purchases
        - Tax the tourists
        - Sales tax/lodging tax
        - Finding a path forward to getting a clear idea of what taxes are needed and then going to the voters

- **Transportation and Mobility: Vehicle Network – Beth Vogelsang**
  - Defining features and characteristics
    - Primary growth in travel patterns is associated with Jefferson County, particularly along HWY 119 and connections with US-6
    - Even with growth, the County is not expected to experience roadway capacity issues
  - Issues + Needs
    - Traveler amenities to accommodate increased traffic during peak season
    - Congestion on US-6 and I-70 may limit southern access in/out of the county
    - Topography limits the county to the access it has currently
    - National Forest land is often times bordered by private land
    - Amount of commercial trucks on Hwy 72
  - Opportunities
    - New parking and pull off areas
    - Additional wayfinding to trails and amenities
  - BHAG's
    - New roadway access
    - Slow traffic pull-outs
    - Land swaps with stakeholders
    - Tax the exotic car driving experience

- **Transportation & Mobility: Bicycle Network – Beth Vogelsang**
  - Defining features and characteristics
    - State Highway 119 is Regional Bike Corridor
    - There is limited regional trail connectivity
  - Issues + Needs
    - Many sections of SH 119 have shoulders that are < 4ft wide, making it challenging for bicyclists to comfortably navigate the full corridor
    - Gilpin County could be a stronger component of a regional trail network
    - Private land ownership
    - National Forest lands are not accessible due to being surrounded by private land
    - Improving the safety of riding on Hwy 46
  - Opportunities
    - Continuous shoulder along HWY 119 in coordination with CDOT from Black Hawk north to Boulder County
    - Wayfinding for viewsheds, trail connections, and rest areas for bikes or recreational users
    - Stronger ties to regional trail system
    - Partner with CDOT and Jeffco for improvements
  - BHAG's
    - New county trail connections

        - Right-of- way improvements
        - Add a bike connection from mammoth gulch to apex road into Black Hawk to create comprehensive trail system. Would be a huge opportunity for bike rental business in Rollinsville and Black Hawk
        - Capitalizing on the bike traffic

- **Transportation & Mobility: Transit Services – Beth Vogelsang**

    - Defining features and characteristics
        - Existing transportation services adequately the demand
        - Before COVID-19, the demand for senior social and medical service travel was increasing, while Gilpin Connect saw little to no increase in demand
        - Fixed route transit service does not seem viable in existing context, but could
    - Issue + Needs
        - Additional staff and vehicles to meet the growing demand
        - Resilient funding source that relies less on general funds from the county
        - Communication of access points for service
    - Opportunities
        - Technology to support future transit needs, including scheduling coordination
        - Additional vehicles and drivers based on growing demand for service
        - Fixed route transit service does not seem viable or necessary in existing context, but could be reevaluated given future development patterns
    - BHAG's
        - Multiple, independent funding sources

- **Land Use – Francois De Kock**
    - Defining features and characteristics
        - Commercial
        - Residential
        - Agriculture
        - Mining
        - Faith based and/or charity
        - County owned land
        - State owned land other than Parks
    - Issues + Needs
        - Agricultural potential compromised through development
        - Lack of developable land
        - Mining claims
        - Water
        - Altitude
        - Climate

        - Growing season
    - Opportunities
        - Quality agricultural land set aside for that use alone
        - Identify developable land
    - BHAG's
        - Purchasing of mining rights
        - Prepare plans for predefined small areas
        - Development on mine tailings
        - More opportunities for private land owners who have contaminated water for mining on their property
        - Development without negative impacts on residents

- **Subdivisions & Neighborhoods – Francois De Kock**
    - Defining features and characteristics
        - Large and small
        - Old and new
    - Issues + Needs
        - Out of County visitors that do not know and/or honor private land
        - Indiscriminate and careless use of guns
        - Topography – very steep
        - Rezoning areas for development
        - Animal codes
        - Fire mitigation
    - Opportunities
        - Establishing HOA regulations and control
    - BHAG's
        - A sense of place established for each neighborhood and/or region
        - Neighborhoods that are walkable

- **Public Lands + Parks + Trails – Bill Mangle**
    - Defining features and characteristics
        - 52% of County = Public Land (Federal and State managed)
        - A beautiful and functional resource for outdoor recreation
        - The County own and maintain no parks, and only 1 trail that is 1 mile long – located at the Community Center
    - Issues + Needs
        - "Loved to Death" - parks and trails being enjoyed extensively leads to over-use
        - Public land is underfunded for demands
        - Potential increase in use of popular recreational sites in the future
        - Available land
        - Mine claims
        - Rec center is underused and costly
    - Opportunities

        - Turn parks into a revenue stream
        - Potential for recreation use currently studied by NoCoPlaces
        - Willingness of largest public landowner (ARNF) to collaboratively manage recreation management
        - Create legal vehicle route over Rollins Pass, usable by permit only
        - OHV, Nordic Center, Bike Park, etc
        - Work with USFS to create downhill bike resort
        - Broaden accessibility to Gilpin County Recreation Center
        - "Safe" backcountry skiing experience resort
        - Mountain bike of hiking trail from County border, end to end
    - BHAG's
        - Recreation in complete harmony with private properties in close proximity
        - Successfully managed recreation sites in line with resident and visitor needs
        - Consolidation of mine claims and disparate land
        - Inclusion of ARNF representatives in County planning / permitting decisions
        - Capitalize on private recreation facilities on private land, facilitated by the County
        - Ice hockey rink
        - Parks and recreation district
        - Market "high elevation training" opportunities

- **Community Survey # 1**
    - As of May 11, 2020, @ 11:45 a.m.
        - 200 people had visited the survey page
            - 151 people had completed the survey
    - Demographics
        - 96% of respondents live or own a home in Gilpin County
        - 30% of respondents have lived in Gilpin County for 0-5 years, 36% have lived in Gilpin County for more than 20 years
        - Over 70% of respondents are over age 50
        - 23% are raising children in the County
    - Use: When asked how familiar they were with County policies and regulations
        - Very: 15.9% or 24 people
        - Somewhat: 72.8% or 110 people
        - Not at all: 9.9% or 15 people
        - Unsure: 1.3% or 2 people
    - Engage: When asked what the preferred way to virtually participate in future Comprehensive Plan meetings
        - Digitally, via virtual meetings, website, online surveys, phone calls, emails, social media: 65.6% or 99 people
        - Print, via mailings and hard copy materials available upon request: 2.6% or 4 people

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    - Media, via local newspapers: 1.3% or 2 people
    - All of the above: 29.1% or 44 people
    - Other: 1.3% or 2 people
- **Next steps + Upcoming meetings**
  - Phase Two: Establish a Vision
    - Collet Citizens Survey #1 results – June 1
    - Define a Vision for Gilpin County based on Community Values – June + July
  - Phase Three: Plan Elements
    - BoCC Presentation – June 23
    - PC Update – June 23
    - Second Community Workshop – June 23
    - Interagency Task Force Meeting #3 – July 14
    - Planning Commission Meeting – July 14

New Business: None

Public Comment: None

Staff Update: Community Development is still working remotely. The online portal is up and working. The old courthouse did a soft opening of some of the departments by appointment only.

Adjourn: Commissioner Marr moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:27 p.m., and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Haxel. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Azevedo Jeney
Chair