

APPENDIX B

Alpine-Balsam— **Community Engagement**

Contents—

Engagement has been fundamental to the development of the Alpine-Balsam Vision Plan. This Appendix to the Vision Plan documents the community engagement that has taken place from January through April of 2017.

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Community Open House

April 5, 2017



A Community Open House was held at the North Boulder Community Center to solicit feedback from the community on various planning projects in progress around the city. As part of this event, the preliminary guiding principles and strategies proposed for the Alpine-Balsam Vision Plan were presented for discussion and feedback.

City and consultant team members were present to discuss the project, and printed questionnaires were available for those interested in providing written comments during the event. Participants were also encouraged to go online to fill out the questionnaire electronically, and were given a week to provide responses. A total of 179 people reviewed the questionnaire online and 70 submitted responses.

The questionnaire included a total of seventeen questions. For each of the five guiding principles the following questions were asked: Do the proposed strategies support the guiding principle? Are there important concepts that you would like to see strengthened? and, Are there any additional strategies you would suggest? Finally, the questionnaire ended with the following: Please provide comments on the performance criteria for any of the Guiding Principles. You can comment on any performance criteria, please just note the number of the criterion you reference (ex. "For 2.1.1: I think that..."); and, Do you have any other comments about the Alpine-Balsam draft Vision Plan? A summary of the responses follows.

COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE—

April 5, 2017

Alpine-Balsam Vision Plan Draft **Guiding Principle #1:** Respect and Respond to the Site's Physical Environment

PROPOSED STRATEGY

Alpine-Balsam shall embrace quality design with appropriate scale transitions, and shall enhance community connections to the site, adjacent uses and neighborhoods, by addressing creek, floodplain and watershed issues, open space networks, views, pedestrian/bike safety and roadway conditions.

- 1.1 Enhance the neighborhood with quality design.
- 1.2 Develop variety and diversity in the built form to respond to the neighborhood context.
- 1.3 Improve neighborhood connections to the park, bus stops and other destinations with improved bicycle and pedestrian pathways.
- 1.4 Include integrated water management strategies to address flood risk, with a focus on the co-benefits of green infrastructure including the possible extension of the Goose Creek corridor.
- 1.5 Improve existing streets and crossings for pedestrian and bike safety, especially along Broadway.
- 1.6 Provide adequate site lighting to promote safety and security.

WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK

- Do the proposed strategies provide good support for the guiding principles?
- Are there important concepts that you would like to see strengthened?
- Are there strategies that need to be added to these?



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Alpine-Balsam Vision Plan Draft **Guiding Principle #2:** Create a node of activity along the Broadway corridor

PROPOSED STRATEGY

Alpine-Balsam shall be developed as a node of activity along Boulder's most important transit corridor, with activating uses including retail, commercial space for local small businesses, and community services. Ground floor uses shall be developed carefully to create an active and walkable urban fabric, with varied and defined open spaces and places for arts, culture and multi-generational activities.

- 2.1 Develop active uses near transit stops along Broadway, and good sidewalk connections to enhance walkability and convenience for those taking transit.
- 2.2 Introduce uses that support arts, culture and multi-generational activities to create a welcoming and inclusive community hub.
- 2.3 Support neighborhood vitality with ground floor uses that contribute to activated streets.
- 2.4 Complement development with open space, to create a continuous, pedestrian scaled open space network with varied and defined public open spaces.

WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK

- Do the proposed strategies provide good support for the guiding principles?
- Are there important concepts that you would like to see strengthened?
- Are there strategies that need to be added to these?



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#1: Respect and Respond to the Site's Physical Environment

Response to guiding principle number one was, for the most part, positive with thirty-one responses clearly supporting and only two opposing. A number of detailed neutral comments provided input on specific topics. The largest point of concern was with density and building height, with a desire for heights no more than fifty-five feet and appropriate scale transitions in the built form, especially to the north. Questions were also raised about parking, and the need to protect the neighborhoods from overflow parking. The proposed strategy to "provide adequate street lighting to promote safety and security" prompted a number of comments requesting a moderate approach so as to avoid light pollution, with lighting that is dark sky friendly. Other detailed comments include requests for connections to nature and green space, preservation of views to the mountains, support for high quality design, and a desire for programming for families with children including daycare. Finally, comments supported the idea of addressing flood risk proactively, with development of Goose Creek as a feature.

#2: Create a Node of Activity along the Broadway Corridor

This guiding principle generated thirty-four statements of support, and seven opposing with a number of detailed neutral comments. The most frequent comments were about open space, with support for outdoor gathering, together with a concern that not too much site area be dedicated to open space given the proximity of North Boulder Park and the desire for housing and other uses. Comments also supported the focus on pedestrians and bikes, however, there is still concern about traffic. Frustration was expressed by some wanting more specifics on proposed uses, and suggestions were offered, including: walkable restaurants, small commercial spaces, yoga, after school activities for kids, play areas for kids and adults, public art, maker spaces, community gardens and meeting space for community groups. One person suggested that the senior center be moved to Alpine Balsam, and one person expressed concern about potential drug rehab uses coming to the site. Finally, a comment was made about the importance of creating a strong link across Broadway to make the node of activity successful.

Alpine-Balsam Vision Plan Draft
Guiding Principle #3:
Create a Place with a Vibrant Mix of Uses

POTENTIAL STRATEGIES

Alpine-Balsam shall be a mixed-use development with sufficient density to support the envisioned uses, including housing, retail, city services and other community and commercial uses. Uses shall be developed to enable people to access to goods and services that support a range of basic living, transit to and from work, and access to parks and recreation within a 15 minute walk. Economic analysis is needed to inform decisions about the types and quantities of uses.

- 3.1 Balance the mix of uses and provide sufficient density to maximize community benefit.
- 3.2 Housing is a top priority, with mixed income preferred including low/moderate, middle, and market-rate.
- 3.3 City services shall be included, occupying approximately 150,000 SF.
- 3.4 Utilize retail to activate street edges and support neighborhood needs.
- 3.5 Explore other commercial and public uses, including potential partnerships with Boulder County and non-profits.
- 3.6 Locate all new off-street parking below grade, and replace surface parking with beneficial community uses.

WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK

- Do the proposed strategies provide good support for the guiding principles?
- Are there important concepts that you would like to see strengthened?
- Are there strategies that need to be added to these?



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Alpine-Balsam Vision Plan Draft
Guiding Principle #4:
Build in affordability and sustainability

POTENTIAL STRATEGIES

The Alpine-Balsam site shall be a model of affordable and sustainable living in Boulder, with permanently affordable housing in a walkable, transit-oriented, mixed-use setting to reduce reliance on the automobile, and support car-free living as a viable choice. All buildings shall meet site sustainability goals while also reducing household utility costs while demonstrating best-practice sustainable development.

- 4.1 Prioritize permanently affordable housing units for low/moderate and middle income levels, including ADA accessible housing for seniors and the disabled, as well as some higher income, market-rate units.
- 4.2 Support transit, bicycle and car-sharing strategies to support car-free living.
- 4.3 Support local small business creation with small business incubator and incentives.
- 4.4 Support moderately priced neighborhood shops and services, including food co-ops and farmers markets.
- 4.5 Develop energy and water efficiency strategies to reduce the cost of utilities; engage innovative financing to support renewable energy and water reuse systems.
- 4.6 Explore neighborhood waste reduction, recycling and "sharing" strategies that reduce waste while creating value for others.

WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK

- Do the proposed strategies provide good support for the guiding principles?
- Are there important concepts that you would like to see strengthened?
- Are there strategies that need to be added to these?



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#3: Create a Place with a Vibrant Mix of Uses

This was the most controversial of the guiding principles, as there were various opinions on the types of uses that should be included at Alpine-Balsam, yet supporting statements still out-numbered those challenging the guiding principle, twenty-six to nine. While many support city services at Alpine-Balsam, with one in particular stating directly "we voted for city services here, please do it," others questioned if city office space is an appropriate use at the site. And, while support for housing is strong among most respondents, some expressed concern about housing and its impact on congestion, neighborhood schools and the North Boulder Park. Among those supporting housing, the majority advocated for affordable, middle income and workforce housing. Many also advocated for affordable housing for the most vulnerable populations, and a few stated that no market rate housing should be included at all. Other uses discussed included retail, office and co-working spaces, daycare, outdoor gathering spaces including rooftop gardens, and live-work units. Strong support was expressed for underground parking, with the suggestion that some convenient short-term spaces also be included.

#4: Build in Affordability and Sustainability

While there were fewer comments in this section, support was enthusiastic for both sustainability and affordability goals, with twenty-two affirming support and six withholding support. Comments centered primarily on housing and the role of the automobile, and some advocating for specific sustainability strategies. Housing comments mirrored earlier ones, with strong support for affordable units at all levels, and a few comments that no market rate units should be included. There were also comments supporting mixed income development and a few questioning if affordability targets are too high. Other aspects of affordability garnered strong support as well, including space for local small businesses and an incubator space, with a comment that it should not be just tech-focused. Comments on transportation and parking were mixed, with many requesting "reasonable" parking accommodation even with alternative mobility options, and others calling for restrictions on the automobile and creation of a car-free zone. Finally, comments were made to encourage community land trusts and co-housing, to consider moving the maker space in the library to Alpine-Balsam, and to include rooftops farming, local coops, tool libraries, etc.



COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE—

April 5, 2017

Alpine-Balsam Vision Plan Draft **Guiding Principle #5:** Innovate planning, design and delivery processes

POTENTIAL STRATEGIES

Alpine-Balsam shall be an exemplar in terms of both process and outcomes – it shall be an opportunity for Boulder to manifest its vision and values. The Alpine-Balsam project will embrace innovative processes for engaging the community, leveraging expertise, reviewing and adapting city standards, financing and project delivery, and developing sustainable urbanism.

- 5.1 Commit to meaningful community engagement with regular opportunities for “co-creation” throughout the planning and design process.
- 5.2 Engage local and national expertise to bring creative thinking and best practices to the project.
- 5.3 Update city standards as needed to enable full realization of project vision and guiding principles.
- 5.4 Explore creative financing and project delivery strategies that support quality design while maximizing project value.
- 5.5 Develop site as a model for sustainable urbanism meeting Boulder’s 2030 climate goals.

WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK

- Do the proposed strategies provide good support for the guiding principles?
- Are there important concepts that you would like to see strengthened?
- Are there strategies that need to be added to these?



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Alpine-Balsam Vision Plan Draft **Context:** The Alpine Balsam Site

SETTING

The Alpine-Balsam site sits along the Broadway corridor, north of University Hill (Uni-Hill) and downtown. The study area is defined as property within a quarter mile radius of the site. The neighborhood is generally walkable and bicycle friendly, with multiple bus lines along Broadway, including the SKIP line with regular service to downtown, and bicycle routes along 9th and 13th streets that are well used by commuters. Connections in the east-west direction are more limited. The site is surrounded by a variety of uses and scales from single family residential, to institutional, commercial, retail and multi-family.

The Alpine-Balsam site is 8.8 acres of property that houses the former BCH Broadway campus which will soon be vacated and while much of the building is not viable for re-use; the more recently constructed medical office portion of the building (Medical Pavilion) may offer reuse potential and will be studied further. The site also includes parcels south of Alpine along Broadway and on Noreth St. One parcel is occupied by the parking structure with retail facing Broadway, and a three-story office building (The Brenton Building) that will soon be renovated for city offices. There are also an unbuilt parcel facing North St.



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#5: Innovate Planning, Design and Delivery Processes

The last guiding principle also garnered enthusiastic response from most. However, a few expressed skepticism, with twenty-five supporting and four opposing. Many were supportive of the ambitious goals in the vision statement and called for the city to embrace this opportunity to be truly innovative. The most frequent comments were those focused on design quality, with a desire for a unique and beautiful project. There was also support expressed for the community engagement that has occurred so far, however, some noted their concern that too much community process might encourage a NIMBY response from neighbors. Those that were skeptical of this guiding principle voiced a concern that process innovations were proposed to enable increased heights and density. Finally there were a few comments about the need to be realistic financially, and one comment suggesting that the city consider transfer of land to a non-profit or creation of land trust for housing development.

Closing Thoughts

The last two questions asked for input on the performance criteria and any other aspects of the vision plan. The responses to those questions reiterated the same themes that have already been discussed – concerns about density and parking, aspirations for affordable housing, and excitement for a dynamic community place that will reflect community values of equity and sustainability. Many respondents provided closing comments supporting the vision and offering their hope it will be achieved. Final notes also relate to the timing, with comments including “Be patient because the community has one crack at this to get it right,” and “Thank you! A good start. Let’s not delay!”

City Council Study Session

February 28th, 2017

Executive Summary

The purposes for the Feb. 28, 2017 study session were to provide updates and solicit council input on:

- The vision and guiding principles for the Alpine-Balsam site.
- The Central Broadway Corridor Design Framework.
- Proposed next steps in the planning process.

In addition, staff provided an update on the potential reuse of the Medical Office Pavilion and the City Facilities Assessment. City Council Members Present: Mayor Suzanne Jones, Mayor Pro Tem Andrew Shoemaker, Matt Appelbaum, Aaron Brockett, Jan Burton, Lisa Morzel, Sam Weaver, Bob Yates, and Mary Young

Staff Recommendation

Motion to accept the summary of the Feb. 28, 2017, study session on the Alpine-Balsam Project, Central Broadway Corridor Design Framework, Reuse of Medical Office Pavilion, and City Facilities Assessment.

Background

The background information for this topic can be found in the study session memorandum and the study session presentation, both dated February, 28 2017.

Study Session Summary

Part I: Alpine-Balsam Proposed Vision and Guiding Principles (Draft Vision Plan)

During the study session, council members reviewed and discussed the Draft Vision Plan, which includes the below vision statement and guiding principles.

Vision Statement

Council supported the proposed vision statement for the Alpine-Balsam site: "Alpine-Balsam is envisioned as a vibrant multi-generational hub for community life and city services – a welcoming and inclusive new model for affordable sustainable living." There was interest in adding "equitable" to the vision statement. Equitable was defined as fair, yet not necessarily assuring that every interest or desired outcome would be addressed on the site. There was also interest in expanding the vision statement from "city services" to include both city and county as "local government services."

Guiding Principles

Council supported the proposed guiding principles for the Alpine-Balsam site including:

- Guiding Principle #1 – Create a place with a vibrant mix of uses.
- Guiding Principle #2 – Create a node of activity along the Broadway corridor.
- Guiding Principle #3 – Build in affordability and sustainability.
- Guiding Principle #4 – Respect and respond to the site's physical environment.
- Guiding Principle #5 – Engage process innovations in project planning, design and delivery.

As part of the development of the Alpine-Balsam Vision Plan, council members cautioned against being too general. The purchase of this site provides a strategic opportunity. It cannot be all things to all people. There was also acknowledgement that the city may need a different definition of success when opportunities are considered more holistically along the Broadway corridor including Alpine-Balsam, and the Boulder County Broadway and Iris site. For instance, the city may be able to achieve its goals by putting more affordable housing on the Broadway and Iris site and less on the Alpine-Balsam site.

Council agreed that affordable housing should be located at Alpine-Balsam, and those opportunities should not be exclusive to permanently affordable units. Rather, affordable housing at the site should include opportunities for a mix of income levels, including higher income units to help keep the low/moderate and middle income housing affordable and sustainable. Some council members discussed the importance of commercial and retail on

the site. Several council members were supportive of daylighting Goose Creek and ensuring that it is an amenity on the site.

Regarding Guiding Principle #5, there was a suggestion to consider process sub-committees similar to Affordable Housing and the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP) as a way to keep council engaged and the project moving.

Part II: Central Broadway Corridor Design Framework and Planning Process

After the Alpine-Balsam discussion, council looked at the Central Broadway Corridor Design Framework, which will contribute to future planning at the former Boulder Community Health (BCH) site and a number of others along Broadway.

Corridor Design Framework

Council supported completing the Corridor Design Framework. Several council members spoke of the need to coordinate planning efforts across multiple sites (i.e., Alpine-Balsam and Broadway-Iris), and were receptive to the Corridor Design Framework as a means of facilitating that coordination. At least one council member emphasized the need for both the Vision Plan and the Corridor Design Framework to be sufficiently specific so that they do set reasonable parameters within which subsequent Area Planning can be conducted.

Alpine-Balsam Area Plan:

Council supported developing an Alpine-Balsam Area Plan after council acceptance of the Alpine-Balsam Vision Plan.

Broadway-Iris Area Plan

Council supported developing a Broadway-Iris Area Plan if the City-County partnership regarding coordinated planning and redevelopment of the Alpine-Balsam and Broadway-Iris sites continues to be mutually beneficial. Council provided additional guidance with respect to some area planning issues including the following:

- Several council members noted that “success” should not be measured on what can be accomplished at one particular site, but on what can be accomplished across several sites. As such, council members suggested that area planning for Alpine-Balsam and Broadway-Iris should be conducted concurrently, or at least in a coordinated manner.
- Two council members spoke to the relationship between the Alpine-Balsam Vision Plan, Alpine-Balsam and Broadway-Iris Area Plans, the Corridor Design Framework, and a potential subcommunity plan. The council was generally supportive of moving forward with area

planning upon completion of the Vision Plan and Framework, with some relationship to a potential future larger area or subcommunity plan.

- A number of council members recommended against “one parcel” area planning (e.g., conducting an area plan that encompassed only the Alpine-Balsam site, but none of the nearby parcels). They emphasized the need to thoughtfully include other parcels that might be influenced by redevelopment of the Alpine-Balsam (or Broadway-Iris) site.
- The council noted that the prospect of the city assuming responsibility for the maintenance and operation of the site (after BCH’s departure) speaks to the need for expediency in conducting the planning necessary to redevelop the site.
- While council is fully supportive of the involvement of community members and boards/commissions in current and upcoming planning processes, several council members urged staff to remain open to multiple uses at the Alpine-Balsam and Broadway-Iris sites, and to not remove any use options in advance of bringing the planning projects back to council for review.
- Several council members encouraged creativity and openness in considering various redevelopment project delivery methods: coordination with county and other public entities; public-private partnerships; creative financing; etc.

Part III: Update on Medical Office Pavilion Reuse

Council supported going forward with a more intensive reuse analysis of the Medical Office Pavilion. Council acknowledged and appreciated the work of the Urban Land Institute’s Technical Advisory Panel in completing an initial analysis of the Medical Office Pavilion. Several council members spoke to the appropriateness of evaluating the costs of renovation/reuse against the nature and quality of building that would result from reuse, and the alternative of constructing a new building.

Council would like staff to bring back results of the more intensive reuse analysis once completed, including more refined cost estimates.

Part IV: Update on City Facilities Assessment

City Council supported the approach for city services to be located at both Alpine-Balsam and the Civic Area. In terms of city services, the Civic Area will be a place that focuses on community engagement (dialog and involvement) and Alpine-Balsam will be a place for one-stop customer service. Council was supportive of the vision to relocate Council Chambers, City

Manager's Office and the City Attorney's Office to a new building in the East Bookend in order to create a more inviting environment for community participation. Council was interested in seeing more detail in the future related to what departments are going where and the amount of square footage the city would occupy on the Alpine-Balsam site. The next phase of the City Facilities Assessment will provide this level of detail and will be shared with council at that time. Staff will also be working this year to investigate development opportunities and better understand potential in private-public partnerships to help develop new city facilities both at Alpine-Balsam and in the Civic Area, with a plan to return to council in 2018.

NEXT STEPS

Alpine-Balsam Vision Planning Process

- Incorporate council feedback into vision and guiding principles and develop design guidelines, all of which will ultimately be packaged in Vision Plan document.
- Host community open house on April 10 to collect feedback on Vision Plan.
- Return to City Council on May 2 for consideration of approval of Vision Plan.
- Initiate area planning for Alpine-Balsam including technical studies (e.g., transportation, flooding and natural systems, economic); programming; and concept site design. Consider concurrent timing of area planning and discussions with possible partners and economic analysis.

Alpine-Balsam Site Use

- Medical Pavilion: Begin a feasibility study to further analyze the cost and scope to reuse, study expected to take 6 to 9 months to complete.
- Brenton Building: Scheduled to be renovated, starting in the second quarter of 2017.
- Parking structure at the corner of Alpine and Broadway: Currently undergoing necessary structural repairs and partial replacement of the northwest stair. Anticipated to be completed early in the second quarter of 2017.
- Main Hospital: Currently, as defined in the purchase agreement, BCH is leasing back the hospital site and certain levels of the parking structure from the city until the end of Dec. 2017. BCH is in the process of designing a new facility at their Foothills campus. City staff is working with BCH to confirm their design and construction schedule, which will most likely revise the timing for them to move out of Alpine-Balsam. In the meantime, staff will develop a plan for sustainable deconstruction of the hospital which will be shared with council in the 4th quarter of 2017. The feasibility of potential interim use of the hospital will be evaluated.

Broadway-Iris Site

- Initiate a form of area planning for the Broadway and Iris site in partnership with Boulder County and in coordination with the Alpine-Balsam Area Plan effort.

Central Broadway Corridor Design Framework

- Complete the Inventory component of the Framework.
- Work with city staff and the community to develop the Synthesis component (includes hosting a joint board/commission workshop and community open house in April).
- Return to City Council on May 2 for acceptance of Framework.
- Identify what content from the Framework will be included in the BVCP update.

City Facilities Assessment

- Refine programming as well as technical site analysis of Alpine-Balsam and the Civic Area.
- Analysis of different redevelopment and phasing strategies along with cost estimates and financing options.
- Return to City Council in third quarter 2018 with implementation options for council consideration.

INFORMATION PROVIDED IN RESPONSE TO COUNCIL QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

- Daylighting Goose Creek – Several council members were supportive of daylighting Goose Creek and ensuring that it is an amenity on the site. Further study will be required to determine if it is feasible since the existing underground piped conveyance is dry much of the time in this area. This study will occur as part of the area planning process.
- Tour of St. Vrain Community Hub in Longmont – The St. Vrain Community Hub in Longmont, recently built by Boulder County, provides an example of a centralized approach that offers many services at one location. At council's request, a tour will be set up for council members to view the facility.
- List and Map of City Facilities – A request was made to see a list of city facilities currently leased and annual expenses related to those leases. This information will be provided in a subsequent Heads Up to council.

Joint Board Worksession

January 19th, 2017

On Jan. 19, 2017 the city hosted a meeting with 13 participants representing several city boards (Planning Board, Transportation Advisory Board, and the Design Advisory Board).

The meeting began with an overview of the previous community input, followed by a more in depth presentation of the community workshop from the evening before. This was followed by a presentation reviewing each of the schemes developed to show the range of thinking explored. A key purpose behind this meeting was to gather input that would lead to refinements to the vision and guiding principles. To further that goal, input was collected in three broad discussions aligning with the three initial guiding principles. That input is summarized below:

Create a place with a mix of uses

The goal of creating a mixed-use development has received unanimous support from the community thus far. The participants at the community workshop and the boards echoed this support and worked to explore how the mix of uses should be balanced. All participants agree that economic analysis is needed, and there is strong support for public uses on the site. Discussion included the following:

- Mixed use guidelines should ensure that ground floor uses activate the development, with a goal of achieving 24/7 activity, or close to it, and should include side streets and courts, not just the Broadway frontage.
- When considering the balance of commercial and residential uses, city services and office space are particularly beneficial because they do not induce additional housing.
- Housing should be the highest priority for the site, and housing designated for city

employees should be considered.

- Retail uses will be beneficial but will need to be considered carefully to avoid competition with existing retail uses.
- Community serving uses will be beneficial but should not duplicate uses available at the North Boulder community center up the street.
- There were discussions regarding the appropriate balance of city office space at Alpine-Balsam versus at the Civic Area.
- Roadway edges should be adapted to improve experience at Broadway.
- Potential daylighting of Goose Creek could create a successful setting for retail.

Support affordability and sustainability

Participants heard about and were supportive of the public prioritizing affordable housing, offering suggestions on how to realize this goal. While there was also strong support for sustainability goals, the issue of affordable housing occupied the majority of the discussion. Key points include the following:

- Zoning changes are needed to encourage development of many modest units.
- Coop housing should be included in addition to rental housing.
- Unbundled parking should be provided for housing and other uses, as this is good for affordability.
- Mixed use helps affordability because it lessens the overall parking requirement.
- Mixed income development seems like a good approach, including "penthouses for the 1%" to help fund the affordable housing.
- Affordable senior housing should be included in the plan.
- Homeless transitional housing should be included in the plan, however there

were some questions and concerns about how that would be implemented.

- Roof areas with public accessible greenspace and/or can supplement green space on the ground, and provide additional play areas for families.
- Rooftop greenspace is desirable however there is a tradeoff with PV solar rooftops – both should be provided.

Respect and respond to the site's physical environment

Challenges and opportunities relating to the existing physical environment highlight one of the key tradeoffs for the Alpine-Balsam project – the tradeoff between height and open space. As issues of flood mitigation, neighborhood connectivity, pedestrian safety and walkability all support development of an open space network, while the goal of vibrancy and mixed use development highlight the need for sufficient density. To fully capture the dynamics of this issue, the project team has created an additional guiding principle: “Create a significant node of activity along the Broadway corridor.” Points of discussion include the following:

- Open space on the site should be developed to support a walkable environment.
- The site should be “permeable” to the adjacent neighborhoods with publically accessible pathway through it.
- Pedestrian pathways should be developed as part of a continuous open space network, with intimate scaled “outdoor rooms” along a walkable path.
- Extension of the existing street grid versus campus style development is preferred.
- Planning controls should be developed to enforce the appropriate character and scale of the open space network.
- Flood mitigation strategies should be developed to improve the local conditions and to model best practices for the larger community.
- As Goose Creek flood management strategies are explored, it will be important to avoid obstacles to walkability.
- If Goose Creek is developed with a crossing under Broadway this could possibly double duty as a pedestrian underpass.
- Broadway crossings are not safe and need to be improved.
- Building heights over 55 feet may be desired to support additional housing; concerns were raised, however, about human scaled development – strong differences of opinion were expressed on this issue.

Process Innovation

Finally, there were comments about process and overarching goals that do not “fit” into the three preliminary guiding principles. Those issues, and further discussion as a team, had led the creation of a fifth guiding principle: “Engage process innovations in project planning, design and delivery.” The comments received focus on the benefits to be gained from a proactive and aspirational approach to the project, including the following:

- Design excellence is a key to success and needs to be built into the process.
- Multiple “hands” in design tend to create a better result.
- Design competitions should be explored as a strategy to increase design quality.
- Consider designating the site as a TOD (transit oriented development) to reinforce the benefits of increased density at the Alpine-Balsam location.
- Push sustainable development goals and work to Integrate and build on the findings from the EcoDistrict workshop.
- Test ideas that push the boundaries on height and density to better understand what will create preferred outcomes.
- Consider creating a new land use category for the site.

Conclusion

The input received was extremely beneficial and underscores the value of community engagement and an open collaborative approach to planning and design. Based on the input received and dialogue as a team, the initial set of three building principles has been expended to five, and refinements have been made to the supporting actions identified under each. We commend the city council on its recommendation to engage a more robust and open planning process.



Community Workshop

January 18th, 2017

On Jan. 18, 2017 the city hosted a community workshop with over 100 attendees. Participants used hands-on activities to brainstorm and weigh different uses of the site and consider topics such as mix of uses; amounts of affordable housing, green space, retail space, or other uses; and the role and siting for city facilities.

In addition to providing the project team with valuable input regarding the community's vision and values, it was an opportunity for community members to listen and learn from each other as they help to create a vision for the site.

The workshop began with an overview of the site and the preliminary guiding principles. Participants were seated at ten tables. Three tables were designated as "low" density programs (FAR 1.5), four tables were designated as "medium" density programs (FAR 2.0), and three tables were designated "high" density programs (FAR 2.5). Each table was supplied with site plan maps and an amount of blocks representing the magnitude of program area (low, medium, and high). The proposed city space was shown in blue, with blocks representing 140,000 SF, retail space was shown in red with blocks representing 24,000 SF, and residential was shown in yellow with blocks representing 154,000 SF. Additionally,



each table had uncolored blocks representing additional space that could be assigned for any use the table participants preferred. The quantity of the additional, uncolored blocks varied depending on the density (low, medium, high) that was assigned. The low density scheme had an additional 113,000 SF of unassigned space, medium density had 305,000 SF of unassigned space, and high density had 498,000 SF of unassigned space. Teams used colored dots to designate the type of use preferred for the unassigned buildings and provided post-it notes describing details of the uses. Finally, all new parking is assumed to be below grade.



The purpose of the exercise was to discover -- through the act of placing blocks -- what some of the challenges, tradeoffs and opportunities are on the site.

It was underscored at the outset that final density and use determinations will be made quite a bit later based on additional analysis including financial modeling. As the exercise began participants were asked to consider the draft guiding principles and the following questions as they worked on site design concepts:

Building relationships to the street—

- How is public and private space defined? Is this different for residential, retail and civic buildings?
- What is the entry experience like?
- How is building base expressed, how is roof expressed?

Relationship between buildings and open space—

- What kinds of open space – intimate to large, private to public, and formal to informal?
- How can every space be made purposeful, including spaces in between buildings?
- How does open space integrate with building uses and adjacent areas?
- How do buildings and open space frame views?

Streets and alleys—

- Should new streets and alleys be added within the site?
- What are the various streets like? Consider the hierarchy of streets, alleyways and pedestrian walkways.

Environmental sustainability—

- How does the site organization relate to solar and wind availability?
- How are drainage patterns and stormwater considered?

Building form and massing—

- How are buildings forms developed for human scale (versus monolithic)?
- Do you have any general ideas about materiality?

Outcomes

The model exercise was done twice, so that participants could work at two different densities, with the added benefit that more design options were created. The photographs on this page give a sense of the type of schemes that were created. Figure 1 shows a “low” density scheme, figure 2 shows a “medium” density scheme, and figure 3 shows a “high” density scheme. All teams were given ground rules, which included staying below a 55 foot height limit; however a number of the teams chose to break that rule, as shown in the high density scheme on the right (figure 3). Teams were offered the choice of keeping or replacing the Medical Office Pavilion and most of them kept it although quite a few added an additional floor, as is shown in the medium density scheme below (figure 2). Many of the teams placed green paper on rooftops to indicate a green roof. Some but not all teams showed roadways or circulation paths extending through the site, as is shown in the low density scheme below (figure 1).



Figure 1: Low density option



Figure 2: Medium density option



Figure 3: High density option

Key Takeaways

Participants provided their feedback on the value of the workshop in an open discussion at the end and in written comment cards. The response was extremely positive, as participants felt that they were invited to participate and that their thoughts were heard by the city as well as by each other. The goal of the meeting was “discovery,” as there is much more work to be done before firm alternatives can be developed and vetted. That said, there were some good high level concepts discovered during the evening, as discussed below.

There was strong confirmation of the mixed use goal and support for replacement of the existing hospital in order to make space for a vital community hub with significant new affordable housing. One participant spoke out about the need to confirm that reuse of the hospital is not feasible; the general opinion, however, was that the hospital has served its purpose and that a tremendous opportunity to build the best place for the community would be lost if the hospital remained. That said, there did seem to be strong support for re-use of the medical pavilion, especially if another floor could be added.

The exercise with the blocks at three different densities put a focus on the tradeoffs around height and open space. The participants were encouraged not to focus on which density is “best” but on how to create the best scheme at each density. The economic analysis that will be performed in the next phase of work will inform the thinking around density. That said, there was a general level of “comfort” in the room with each of the densities that were studied. One surprise finding was around the issue of building height. Though all participants were told that a maximum height of 55 feet was a “ground rule” for the study, a number of the tables chose to break that rule, and many voiced the opinion that increased height would benefit the community. The benefits of height included increased program area (more housing), increased open space, and increased variability in scale (i.e., if some buildings are higher and some buildings are lower, the result may be a more interesting overall composition).

Each of the schemes prioritized open space, and many of them called for open space on rooftops. Some of the schemes introduced new roadways and some did not; all, however, seemed to support the creation of a walkable pedestrian-oriented place. All schemes supported the idea of limiting parking to below grade facilities.

Future Uses

Future uses were also a focus of the discussion as participants were asked to organize the site with a base level of housing, retail and city uses, and then to add additional blocks that could be designated for any use. The majority of additional uses specified by the community were housing; however county office space and other commercial and community serving uses were also included in the mix. The uses identified included the following:

- Housing
- Senior Housing
- Homeless Services & Transitional Housing
- Penthouses for the 1% (to help fund affordable housing)
- Start Up Business Space
- Hub for Non-Profits
- Boulder County Facilities
- Live Work
- Daycare
- End of Life Facility
- Health & Wellness Center
- Arts and Culture uses, including artist studios
- Bike Facilities
- Yoga & Coffee
- Gondola Terminal
- Goose Creek Waterway

