

Twin Lakes Stakeholder Group (TLSG)

Wednesday, June 22, 2016

Public Open House Summary and Associated Emailed Comments

Introduction

The purpose of the open house was to solicit community feedback on several land use concept maps the Twin Lakes Stakeholder Group developed as options for the Twin Lakes properties. The concept maps reflected the Group's exploration of different land use options, ways the property could be configured, and where/how dwelling units, roads and various amenities could be constructed on the properties if development occurs. The maps included open space, wildlife corridors, trails and other community benefits. There were concept maps based on the current land use designation of low density residential, as well as the proposed open space land use designation and the proposed mixed density residential land use designation. The maps were conceptual only; they are the outcome of collaborative discussions by the Stakeholder Group and do not represent an agreement or proposal.

The Stakeholder Group hosted the open house to learn what components of each map are appealing to the community and why, as well as which aspects are not appealing and why not. Additionally, the Stakeholder Group was interested in hearing community perspectives on which building style(s) and façade(s) are viewed as being most appropriate for the Twin Lakes should development occur. Blank maps and building cut-outs were also available for anyone interested in creating an additional concept map for the Stakeholder Group's consideration. Approximately 60 members of the community attended the open house.

In addition to taking comments on the concept maps at the open house, the Stakeholder Group also invited comments via email. The concept maps and descriptions were posted on the City of Boulder website and comments were accepted for more than two weeks. Approximately 35 comments were submitted via email.

SCENARIO ONE
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No dwelling units• Community open space
LIKES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meets community and neighborhood needs• Provides additional open space for the nearby residents• Supports wildlife• Compliments the existing Twin Lakes Open Space• Offers trail connections within the property and to other areas with the construction of bridges• Increases recreational offerings in the area• Integrates structures and unstructured community assets• Provides community amenities, such as a community garden• Preserves open space• Limits development of the property• Does not increase flooding risks, traffic, or density• Does not place additional stress on existing infrastructure• Preserves neighborhood character• Adheres to Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP) policies• Maintains the integrity of nearby neighborhoods• Encourages ecological benefits such as endangered pollinator habitat, shortgrass prairie reintroduction, and wildlife habitat

SCENARIO ONE

- No dwelling units
- Community open space

CONCERNS

- Offers no additional affordable housing opportunities
- Encourages the idea of needing affordable housing, but not wanting it close to any existing neighborhoods
- Does not address hydrology concerns, as new vegetation types and a community garden could increase the water table
- Needs larger wildlife corridor and undisturbed wildlife areas
- Benefits only immediate neighbors
- Does not provide adequate reason to change the land use designation
- Will be disregarded by decision makers
- Creates confusion over whether Boulder County or the City of Boulder will pay for maintenance and liability
- Increases mosquito concerns
- Does not validate affordable housing needs

POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS

- Add a park or owl recognition area.
- Increase undisturbed wildlife area.
- Build a park.
- Leave one parcel more open and with fewer trees than the other to allow plane and kite recreational opportunities.
- Replace the community garden with native prairie grass.
- Build a playground.
- Remove the pond.
- Create less formal recreation options.
- Consider adding an aviary, short grass prairie demonstration area, and native vegetation.
- Add a dirt bike area for children.

GENERAL COMMENTS

- Leave the property the way it is to save money.
- This is the only acceptable scenario.
- This scenario will create the only park in the area.
- This land is unsuitable for any development due to hydrological concerns.
- Gunbarrel is a dumping ground for Boulder and leaving this area as open space is a step in the right direction of how the area should be treated.
- Gunbarrel should not be a part of Boulder.
- Affordable housing should be built closer to services and businesses.
- The pond may not be necessary with the Twin Lakes so close.
- This scenario is manipulative in terms of human impact.
- The City of Boulder should stay out of this scenario.
- The resources that would be used to implement this scenario would be better spent on mitigating larger Boulder County concerns, rather than enhancing an area for the benefit of immediate neighbors.

SCENARIO TWO

- 34 units on north field
- 24 units on south field
- 58 units total
- 2.9 units per acre
- Housing for approximately 133 people
- One-story buildings

LIKES

- Preserves infrastructure with low density
- Maintains wildlife space with defined corridor
- Meets the needs of the senior population
- Provides low-density housing
- Provides direct access to Twin Lakes Open Space
- Offers trail connections within the property and to other areas with the construction of bridges
- Attempts compromise between people who do not want development and those who do
- Increases impervious surfaces less than other development options
- Provides lower density housing than other proposed scenarios
- Integrates new and existing residences
- Matches density of surrounding neighborhoods
- Provides nice housing types compared to apartment buildings or dense townhomes

CONCERNS

- Increases cars without providing adequate parking
- Does not provide adequate parking
- Causes increase in crime
- Increases density too much, which will cause overcrowding
- Damages neighborhood character
- Increases density so it does not match nearby neighborhoods
- Violates BVCP commitment to infill development
- Decreases size of the wildlife corridor and undisturbed wildlife areas
- Destroys habitat values of the fields
- Increases the probability of taxpayers having to pay for damages due to unsuitable development in the future
- Creates an affordable housing enclave
- Creates drainage problems and does not address hydrological concerns
- Increases traffic
- Increases noise
- Does not provide adequate housing to meet Boulder County's needs
- Does not provide the infrastructure to support population increase
- Tax fraud
- Increases risk of nearby residences flooding
- Increases density in an area without adequate services and infrastructure
- Develops on a flood plain

POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS

- Move development further away from bird habitat.
- Ensure enough interior parking so there is no parking on Twin Lakes Road.
- Add a community garden.
- Make it all open space.

SCENARIO TWO

- 34 units on north field
- 24 units on south field
- 58 units total
- 2.9 units per acre
- Housing for approximately 133 people
- One-story buildings

- Define parking spaces.
- Add more community amenities and features.
- Make all homes single-family homes.
- Keep northern parcel natural open space.
- Add a community garden and playground on the south side.
- Drastically reduce the density of dwelling units.
- Offer a variety of units without increasing density.
- Find ways to minimize light pollution.
- Add a playground.
- Come up with enforceable no-parking policies for Twin Lakes Road.

GENERAL COMMENTS

- This is the only acceptable scenario if the area is not left as open space.
- The façade photographs of this development are depressing.
- Affordable housing should be dispersed in a region and not concentrated.
- Twin Lakes Road cannot become a parking lot.
- This scenario is in direct contrast to what was voiced at neighborhood listening sessions.
- Affordable housing should be offered in Gunbarrel Center, not at this location.
- Boulder County should buy or redevelop dispersed units in existing complexes

SCENARIO THREE

- 42 units on northern field
- 42 units on southern field
- 84 units total
- 4.2 units per acre
- Housing for roughly 193 people
- Two-story buildings

LIKES

- Offers community amenities, such as a garden, playground, walking trails, and open space
- Offers trail connections within the property and to other areas with the construction of bridges
- Maintains wildlife space with defined wildlife corridor
- Provides tasteful housing and spacing
- Offers more open space than other scenarios
- Increases density to an acceptable level
- Encourages entire community to utilize community amenities, not just the immediate neighbors
- Allows buffer between existing houses and new development
- Offers sufficient parking
- Does not require a change from the current land use designation

SCENARIO THREE

- 42 units on northern field
- 42 units on southern field
- 84 units total
- 4.2 units per acre
- Housing for roughly 193 people
- Two-story buildings

CONCERNS

- Allows development on a flood plain
- Allows development in an environmentally-sensitive area
- Increases density in a damaging manner
- Leaves room for neighbors to continue complaining
- Does not meet senior housing needs, as two- or three-story buildings are not good for the senior population
- Does not provide adequate parking for influx of people
- Places playground right next to Twin Lakes Road
- Does not provide adequate, affordable housing to meet the needs of Boulder County citizens
- Increases traffic, noise, and congestion
- Utilizes poor design elements
- Impacts wildlife negatively by taking away open space and decreasing the size of the wildlife corridor
- Impacts neighborhood character adversely
- Ignores drainage and hydrological concerns

POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS

- Preserve the land as natural open space.
- Increase the size of the wildlife corridor
- Build denser housing.
- Offer more on-site parking.
- Use design elements from Louisville.
- Offer more diverse building densities throughout the property.
- Do not build any two-story units.
- Add some single-family detached homes instead of all multi-unit homes.
- Reduce the unit density.
- Add a dog park.
- Make the density more compatible with that of surrounding neighborhoods.
- Reduce the height of the buildings to keep mountain views from Red Fox Hills.
- Retain open space look and feel with wildlife, viewsheds, and riparian corridors.
- Add walking trails on both sides of the development.
- Construct a Twin Lakes community park.
- Surround buildings with mature evergreen trees.
- Include more trails within the community to allow new residents to access the current trail system.
- Offer more diverse structures and floor plans.
- Move the road and all parking to the inside of the development to decrease disturbances for open space visitors.
- Add a trail connection on the western side of the south parcel.
- Utilize townhome-style housing rather than apartment buildings to fit into the neighborhood.

SCENARIO THREE

- 42 units on northern field
- 42 units on southern field
- 84 units total
- 4.2 units per acre
- Housing for roughly 193 people
- Two-story buildings

GENERAL COMMENTS

- The County should find money to buy dispersed units in existing Gunbarrel complexes to provide permanent affordable housing.
- Future developers will probably add more houses in the undesignated areas after the initial building.
- This property should not be annexed, and the City of Boulder should stay out of this area.
- Boulder Valley School District (BVSD) parcel has the land dedication for school or recreational use only.
- The buildings are ugly and boring.
- Hot air balloons could come back if the area were turned into a park.
- There is a lot of wasted space that could be used to increase the size of the wildlife corridor or open space.

SCENARIO FOUR

- 69 units on north field
- 48 units on south field
- 117 units total
- 5.8 units per acre
- Housing for roughly 269 residents
- Two-story buildings

LIKES

- Maintains neighborhood character with space between and arrangement of buildings, particularly the use of tri-plexes
- Mitigates visual impact of density with spacing between units
- Creates nice buffer with existing houses by placing infrastructure inside the development and having yard backing the existing homes and the wildlife corridor
- Is within the current LDR density
- Offers community benefits and features, such as a playground, community garden, and walking trails
- Offers reasonable density compared to other scenarios
- Creates nicer visual with driveways in front of units
- Offers appropriate mixed density
- Provides a significant amount of affordable housing for Boulder County
- Balances open space and development with an acceptable density
- Allows space between existing houses and new development

CONCERNS

- Increases density in a detrimental manner
- Disregards hydrological concerns with construction in a high groundwater area.

SCENARIO FOUR

- 69 units on north field
- 48 units on south field
- 117 units total
- 5.8 units per acre
- Housing for roughly 269 residents
- Two-story buildings

- Increases traffic, noise, and congestion
- Does not provide adequate parking
- Offers only one type of home styles
- Does not match the rural-residential feel of the existing neighborhoods
- Increases risk of flooding
- Decreases undisturbed wildlife areas
- Offers playground, but next to a road
- Removes foraging grounds
- Impacts the environment and wildlife negatively
- Creates too many road cuts
- Does not offer connection between north-south unpaved trails
- Offers only single-road access

POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS

- Move the playground away from the road.
- Move the wildlife corridor away from the road.
- Offer more diverse housing styles.
- Build patio homes rather than duplexes to fit in with the character of the neighborhood.
- Increase trail connections, especially on the west side of the south parcel.
- Construct a dog park on the northwest or southwest corner.
- Offer single-story homes for the senior population.
- Preserve as natural open space.
- Keep or relocate the dirt bike play area.
- Decrease density.
- Increase the size of the wildlife corridor.
- Increase the amount of open space.
- Extend the sidewalk.
- Add a second playground on the southern parcel.
- Increase defined community space features.
- Make the northern parcel and open space park and build a playground on the southern parcel.

GENERAL COMMENTS

- This is very unattractive in so many ways.
- The County should find money to buy dispersed units in existing Gunbarrel complexes to provide permanent affordable housing.
- The design is ugly.
- This should be the maximum density considered.
- The additional required parking lots would cover all the open space.
- The residents of the area should vote on what happens to the land; a community forum and open house is not an official record of the decision about this land.

SCENARIO FIVE

- 72 units on north field
- 96 units on south field
- 186 units total
- 8.4 units per acre
- Houses roughly 386 residents
- Two-story buildings

LIKES

- Accommodates a diverse range of people
- Utilizes a diversity of structure types
- Offers wildlife corridor
- Balances open space and density
- Explores the concept of shared backyards
- Gives the illusion of more space with building clusters
- Offers community amenities and features, such as a playground and walking trails
- Provides significant affordable housing for Boulder County residents

CONCERNS

- Leaves room for future construction to add additional units
- Increases density in a detrimental manner
- Increases concerns about groundwater levels
- Increases risk of flooding in surrounding neighborhoods
- Does not fit in with surrounding neighborhoods
- Increases density with no consideration for needs of existing neighbors
- Sets a bad precedent
- Allows development on a flood plain and in a high-risk flood zone
- Does not fit the rural residential feel of surrounding neighborhoods
- Does not provide adequate wildlife area
- Increases traffic, noise, trash, and congestion
- Allows for overpopulation in a rural setting
- Denies a proper-sized wildlife corridor
- Does not provide adequate parking given the increase in density
- Lacks integration of north-south walkways
- Does not balance density between parcels
- Allows a large, 30-unit building, which does not fit the character of the neighborhood.
- Increases impervious surfaces, especially once parking is added
- Does not meet senior housing needs, as two- or three-story buildings are not good for the senior population
- Places a playground next to a road
- Violates many BVCP policies, specifically 7.3
- Increases the need for police presence
- Increases resident turnover

POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS

- Preserve as open space.
- Increase open space.
- Make it open space with a park area, trees, a natural playground, and community gardens.
- Identify ways to better meet the needs of existing residents and honor the initial intention of the land when it was donated by the developer.

SCENARIO FIVE

- 72 units on north field
- 96 units on south field
- 186 units total
- 8.4 units per acre
- Houses roughly 386 residents
- Two-story buildings

- Evenly balance density between the two parcels.
- Create better trail connections on the west side of the southern parcel.
- Keep the dirt bike play area for local children.
- Put solar panels on the parking structures.
- Do not use three-story buildings.
- Add more undisturbed wildlife areas.
- Reduce the density.
- Turn the 30-unit building into 18 units with two cul-de-sacs of 3-3 units.

GENERAL COMMENTS

- Current density limits should not be changed.
- The design features are ugly.
- The southern parcel is a school land dedication and should be used for recreation or a school only.
- Development creates a dense, affordable housing enclave that is out of sync with surrounding neighborhoods.
- The County should find money to buy dispersed units in existing Gunbarrel complexes to provide permanent affordable housing.
- Development should be near bus stops and services.

SCENARIO 6

- 126 units on north field
- 111 units on south field
- 237 units total
- 11.85 units per acre
- Houses roughly 545 residents
- Two-story buildings

LIKES

- Offers a diversity of units to potentially meet the needs of a variety of people
- Offers adequate space for a wildlife corridor
- Offers trail connections within the property and to other areas with the construction of bridges
- Creates a playground for local children

CONCERNS

- Increases density too much
- Allows development on a flood plain
- Increases population and cars in an unsuitable manner for the area
- Does not offer adequate parking for the number of people
- Does not allow adequate space for a true wildlife corridor and wildlife areas
- Changes the neighborhood drastically

SCENARIO 6

- 126 units on north field
- 111 units on south field
- 237 units total
- 11.85 units per acre
- Houses roughly 545 residents
- Two-story buildings

- Develops in a manner unsuitable for the local hydrology
- Destroys the rural-residential feeling
- Damages neighborhood character
- Allows three-story buildings, which are too tall for the area
- Segregates proposed residents in a public housing project, far from jobs and services
- Does not address the existing problem of road maintenance, which will be exacerbated by increasing the population
- Does not match density in the surrounding neighborhoods
- Impacts neighbors adversely
- Forces residents to park on the street due to lack of on-site parking
- Blocks viewsheds of surrounding neighbors
- Requires extreme traffic mitigation techniques, such as a stop light
- Aligns trails through wildlife corridor
- Creates a ghetto of affordable housing in an area of single-family homes
- Does not meet senior housing needs, as two- or three-story buildings are not good for the senior population
- Violates BVCP policies
- Destroys the environment
- Does not mitigate hydrological concerns

POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS

- Move large buildings away from the Twin Lakes.
- Preserve as open space.
- Listen to the community desires.
- Reduce density in the southern field.
- Increase room for wildlife.
- Align density with surrounding neighborhoods.
- Mitigate hydrological concerns to avoid flooding in Red Fox Hills.
- Provide adequate parking to discourage parking on Twin Lakes Road.
- Create a very thoughtful parking plan.
- Do not construct any three-story buildings.
- Decrease density.

GENERAL COMMENTS

- The design features are unsightly.
- This design is poorly thought out and is ugly.
- This area has been historically intended for open space since the 1977 BVCP.
- The design and density should fit into the existing neighborhoods, per the BVCP.

General Comments from Public Meeting

- This feels like a project dump.
- The needs and desires of the neighborhoods are being ignored.
- Boulder needs to keep their hands off Gunbarrel; it should not be subject to City government, taxes, or laws.
- Adequate parking must be provided if there is any development.
- There are many more needs in Gunbarrel that should be addressed before this project.
- This public meeting gives the illusion of choice when that is not the case.
- Staff should balance humanity with what they want to do.
- Affordable housing should be constructed at Pollard, Boulder Community Health, or Gunbarrel Center.

Questions from Public Meeting

- Who will own and maintain the area if Scenario One is chosen?
- How will traffic be regulated on Twin Lakes Road in the case of development?
- Who will control access in and out of Twin Lakes Road in the case of development?
- How is this land going to be annexed? It is surrounded by County land with no contiguity.
- What happened for the 4.4 acres of BVSD land? Originally it was described as 14.4 acres.

Themes from Comments Submitted Via Email	
<i>Hydrology</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This area is inappropriate for any development due to hydrology. • Development in this area will cause houses in Red Fox Hills to flood more frequently.
<i>Community</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gunbarrel is a unique and specific sub-community that is different from Boulder. • Any development must honor the community priorities of Gunbarrel. • Turning the property into open space benefits the community most. • Residents moved to Gunbarrel for the open space and rural-residential feel. • The fields must be preserved as open space to protect the community and surrounding neighborhoods. • Gunbarrel needs a centrally-located park. • Nearby residents prefer wilderness and nature. • Simply because the surrounding neighbors are used to living near open space does not mean that is the best use of the property.
<i>Ecological Values</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This area is not an environmental monoculture and has significant value. • Developing over riparian areas will cause many problems in the area, as well as endanger the site's inhabitants. • The City has not fully considered the environmental, open space, and wildlife values in this area. • The fields must be preserved and left as open space to protect the wildlife and other ecological values in the area. • The environmental-wildlife balance will be upset with any development. • Development will compromise the Great Horned Owl hunting grounds.
<i>Density</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural-residential density is the only acceptable density for the area. • This development holds the possibility of endangering the Gunbarrel experience with light pollution, noise, and overcrowding. • Three apartment buildings have been constructed with not additional parks or open space.

Themes from Comments Submitted Via Email

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boulder has overdeveloped the City, and it is not right that Gunbarrel residents are having their housing compromised because of it. • The currently-zoned density should remain. • Lack of amenities in the area prohibits adequate integration of a denser population. • Adding population density to the area will put stress on Gunbarrel amenities. • Increasing density allows the City the opportunity to provide additional amenities to the area, such as playgrounds and libraries. • If there is an increase in density, the developer must look at measures to increase safety, such as sidewalks and traffic mitigation.
<i>Design Features</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any development should include open space outside of the development, as well as an undisturbed wildlife corridor. • Trail connectivity within the properties and to Twin Lakes should be offered, particularly the proposed bridges. • These properties should only have an unpaved bike path, similar to the one at Twin Lakes. • It is unclear how the community garden will have access to water if the property is not developed. • One- or two-story duplexes are better than large apartment buildings. • All community amenities and shared space should be kid-friendly, beyond just sand pit with a jungle gym. • The playground should include a basketball court. • The use of solar panels should be explored wherever appropriate. • The current design features are very disappointing and lack the imagination and creativity that can unfold when a process runs according to land use rules. • One story units are the only feasible options for the senior and disabled populations, but a scenario with a combination of two-story and one-story units could work as well. • Developers should make an effort to find public transportation options that can be explored in this area. • A substantial portion of the houses should be age-restricted to meet the needs of the aging population. • It is not appropriate to put a community garden in the middle of a wildlife corridor or area, as it would create conflicts between gardeners and wildlife. • Human activity in a wildlife corridor would be a deterrent for animals that need to pass. • The two-story, 30-unit building should have increased living areas than the Lydia Morgan Senior apartments. • The facades of the two- and three-story buildings with 12 to 15 units are quite different but still look nice. • The one- and two-story buildings with eight units are sturdy, elegant, and refined. • The two-story building with six units is beautiful but possibly more expensive.
<i>Affordable Housing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rent-to-own affordable housing would be a good option for this area to create a more permanent community. • This development should be moved to 63th and Lookout. • While affordable housing is needed, this is not the proper location. • There are no services in this area to meet the needs of affordable housing

Themes from Comments Submitted Via Email

	<p>residents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City of Boulder should offer affordable housing within the City. • Affordable housing is a responsibility that all must incur to meet the desire for an inclusive community, even if it is not desired by direct neighbors.
<i>Scenarios</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The only acceptable scenarios are scenario one and the unspoken scenario of leaving the property as it is. • The only acceptable option is scenario one. • Scenario one is the best option, as it would give children a place to play rather than Snug Harbor, which has liability issues. • Scenario one must include parking unless it is anticipated that only those within walking distance will utilize the open space. • Scenario one provides a park area that will have the same negative impacts on wildlife as scenario two. • Scenario one would be the best fit for the neighborhood and would likely increase property values in the area • Scenario two fits into the surrounding neighborhood best, but the density is still less than the surrounding areas. • Scenario two is the best option, especially given BCHA's positive history in constructing area-specific developments accepted by the community, such as Kestrel in Louisville. • Scenario two is the best for the aging and disabled population since all buildings are one story. • Scenario two will not meet the needs of many people in the area due to lack of significant housing. • Scenario two with age-restricted houses would provide much-needed housing to the aging population while alleviating density concerns since the aging population drives significantly less than young families. • The house arrangement in scenario two is nice. • If the property cannot be left as open space, the best option is scenario three. • Scenario four is the best scenario. • Scenario four offers the best balance between meeting housing needs and still offering open space. • The mix of three- and six-unit dwellings in scenario four are great, and the housing arrangement fits in well with the surrounding communities. • Scenario five seems to be dangerous and does not offer a clear path for children in a high-density development a clear path to grassy space to play. • Scenario six and the three-story building are out-of-character for the area and will annoy current neighbors. • Scenario six will benefit the most people in the community and still includes many positive community benefits. • Scenarios three through six offer inappropriate density for the area. • Although not listed as a scenario, the parcels should be turned into some sort of park that allows for community amenities.
<i>Process</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professionals relied upon by BCHA are not competent or honest. • BCHA is ignoring the desires of the neighbors and surrounding community. • There seem to be ethical issues with denying the Archdiocese the right to build on the property and then allowing BVSD to purchase it for cheaper, annex it, and

Themes from Comments Submitted Via Email

construct housing.

- The facilitation process has failed to push reset on this site and work together to identify a different property for development or redevelopment.
- There have been breaches of commitment, such as mowing the Twin Lakes field while having promised a wildlife study, which make it seem not all stakeholders are or will be demonstrating integrity.
- The developers should continue with their studies and process until impartial experts can determine that the site is not able to handle the proposed carrying capacity.
- The Twin Lakes Stakeholder Group should be commended for providing a forum where reasonable and rational discussion can be held on a highly emotional topic.