

**Summary of Feedback on Work Program Options for
September 16 Motion re: Planning Issues**

Items in Main Motion	Potentially part of existing work program effort?	Level of Effort
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do by right projects result in better design than projects that go through discretionary review? Comparisons/ examples would be helpful. Process changes that would lead to improvement of the public realm and the design of better buildings. Are there changes to Site Review Criteria that would make discretionary review more effective + lead to better buildings, taking into account roles of both BDAB and PB? 	<p>YES. Issues identified can be addressed through the Design Excellence initiative already underway. This initiative will evaluate built projects to determine if desired outcomes are being achieved, and identify specific tools, incentives, code and/ or process changes that would result in better design outcomes.</p>	<p>The approved motion will make the Design Excellence initiative a more significant work effort than originally anticipated. Planning Board, Design Advisory Board and Council will need to provide input on prioritization and sequencing of desired process and code changes through the evaluation process already underway.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comment on the feasibility of creating a 3-D model that would demonstrate the current zoning capacity of the city 	<p>YES. The feasibility of a 3-D modeling tool can be assessed during early phase of the Comprehensive Plan Update.</p>	<p>Commenting on the feasibility is not a significant work effort. However, depending on scale and scope, implementation could be a significant work effort.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Process changes that would lead to increased predictability in the review process 	<p>YES. Staff has a list of code changes. It is understood that “predictability” in the sense of this motion language is focused on the certainty of outcomes that are approved (or assumed) within the site review approval process. “Predictability” can also refer to certainty for applicants that if certain measures are met, there application will be received favorably.</p>	<p>Predictability needs to be more clearly defined, with common understanding of how it would be achieved through specified code changes. Such changes would need to be prioritized and sequenced within the overall work effort related to code updates.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What has been the role of “community benefit” in obtaining entitlements and does the term need to be defined in the Code? 	<p>YES. The definition of “community benefit” can be added to the list of potential code changes and prioritized accordingly.</p>	<p>The proposed work would need to be prioritized and sequenced within the overall work effort related to code updates.</p>

STAFF EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK ON FULL LIST OF “PLANNING ISSUES”

In advance of the September 16, 2014 special study session on “planning issues,” councilmembers were invited to email a list of specific topics or concerns they would like to discuss. Those lists were compiled and sorted by the meeting facilitator, Heather Bergman, in advance of the meeting, with specific areas of input sorted into three overall topic headings: “Vision,” “Process/Perspectives,” and “Policies/Tools.”

Later in the evening, Council adopted a motion directing staff to evaluate several potential areas of concern. One line of the motion referenced the “Policies/Tools” listed in the study session’s summary table of council input, asking for staff’s review and recommendations regarding how the identified issues might be incorporated into existing or proposed work efforts.

The table on the following pages summarizes the staff response to each of the specific action items (excluding broad areas and information items) in the “Policies/Tools” section of the September 16 summary table.

- Items highlighted in **green** indicate policies or tools that had already been incorporated into the main motion and had clear council support, and which could be addressed as part of an existing work effort. Also included are items not included in the main motion but which are already being considered as part of an existing work effort. Code changes or other actions to implement these items will require prioritization.
- Items highlighted in **blue** were not incorporated in the main motion, are not already incorporated in an existing work effort, but could nonetheless be considered (subject to prioritization) within the context of an existing work effort.
- Items highlighted in **yellow** were not reflected in other items of the main motion, and would require an additional work effort not currently part of the work plan. Brief comment related to the potential work plan impact of these items is provided for each.

Staff would like direction from Council on both the blue and yellow highlighted items as to whether to devote additional time and consideration to these items, which would (particularly in relation to the yellow highlighted items) require some level of trade-off with other priority work plan items.

Specific policies or tools proposed for review, or specific action or solution proposed	Included in main motion?	Will or could be considered in existing project?	Comments
Height modification policy and relationship to community benefits	Yes	Yes	This issue could be considered and prioritized within the staff work program focused on code changes .
Density bonus policy and connection to community benefits	Yes	Yes	This issue could be considered and prioritized within the staff work program focused on code changes .
Downtown commercial density bonus and amount of linkage fees	Yes	Yes	This issue could be considered and prioritized within the staff work program focused on code changes .
Exemptions in growth management policy		Yes	This issue could be considered as part of the BVCP Update or as a potential code change but is not currently specified as an issue to address within either effort.
Codes governing by-right development and relationship to quality of developed product	Yes	Yes	This issue could be considered and prioritized as part of the Design Excellence initiative and potential code changes.
Require onsite affordable housing, no exceptions; or include option at site review to require onsite		Yes	This issue will be considered as part of the Comprehensive Housing Strategy
Revise site review criteria, strengthen requirements for community benefit	Yes	Yes	This issue could be considered and prioritized within the staff work program focused on code changes
Make community benefits binding, measurable, and enforceable; changes trigger a Planning Board review	Yes	Yes	This issue could be considered and prioritized within the staff work program focused on code changes
Consider requiring projects with intensity or height bonuses to be net zero emissions above by-right	Yes	Yes	This issue could be considered and prioritized within the staff work program focused on code changes

Specific policies or tools proposed for review, or specific action or solution proposed	Included in main motion?	Will or could be considered in existing project?	Comments
Reconsider adequate public facilities fee methods to ensure they cover public impacts and externalities		No	Not currently in the scope of existing work efforts and would be a significant project
Review/revise current land use intensity code to incentivize smaller residential units over larger ones		Yes	This issue will be considered as part of the Comprehensive Housing Strategy
Implement ordinance change for ADUs and OAU's and to allow owner-occupied boarding houses		Yes	This issue will be considered as part of the Comprehensive Housing Strategy
Implement program to preserve existing and manufactured housing, micro-zoning of mobile home parks		Yes	This issue will be considered as part of the Comprehensive Housing Strategy
Forecast water availability based on climate change models and apply to build-out scenarios		Yes	Currently in process – Water Conservation Future Study being prepared by Utilities
Implement form-based zoning and overlay districts		No	Not currently in the scope of existing work efforts and would be a significant project
Look at tools/ incentives for assuring better design	Yes	Yes	This issue will be considered as part of Design Excellence
Require earlier input by DAB, neighbors, residents, businesses		No	Will be looking at development process, but not necessarily this specific issue
Develop area plans or a pattern book		Yes and No	Major new area planning efforts not currently on work plan (except for Envision East Arapahoe). "Pattern book" could be an outcome of Design Excellence

Specific policies or tools proposed for review, or specific action or solution proposed	Included in main motion?	Will or could be considered in existing project?	Comments
Require that new neighborhood plans include schools, libraries, transit stops, fire stations, reasonable distances to grocery stores, etc.		No	These types of considerations are part of area planning efforts, however, no additional plans beyond Envision East Arapahoe are currently on the work plan.
Develop a plan for targeting diverse demographics when reviewing projects		No	Will be looking at development process, but not this specific issue
Develop a plan for land banking mobile home parks		Yes	This issue will be considered as part of the Comprehensive Housing Strategy
Develop joint strategy with Boulder Housing Partners to incentivize preservation of existing affordable and workforce housing		Yes	This issue will be considered as part of the Comprehensive Housing Strategy
Explore requiring transportation demand management plans for new commercial projects		Yes	Currently in process. Planning Board to discuss TDM toolkit on Oct. 18
Consider creating a Housing Advisory Board to help develop, coordinate, and monitor City actions on housing		Yes	This issue will be considered as part of the Comprehensive Housing Strategy
Temporarily pause all major site and use plan review projects at the Planning Board level by no longer accepting applications		No	Not supported by council at Sept. 16 meeting
Implement appeals process that could enable project past concept plan phase to proceed to full site plan review during the pause, given adequate community benefit		No	Not supported by council at Sept. 16 meeting

Boulder Planning Board points for discussion with City Council on October 14th

1. Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan
 - Where do we want to be?
 - Add more visualization
 - Link to Implementation Tools
 - Disagreement on the role of quantification
2. Importance of robust community engagement
3. Community benefit in relation to modifications. Tie requests for modifications to community benefit or not? (4 think yes, 3 think no)
 - An important conversation
 - All agree defining community benefit is key
4. Agree on desire/need to create affordable housing for middle income: need the right tools
 - Tools to get affordable housing on site
 - Need to provide both affordable housing and a variety of household types
 - Creative, grassroots approach
 - Organic, infill, include existing neighborhoods too
5. Update Site Review criteria and other regulations (e.g. Zoning, Use tables, etc.)
 - Reflect Comp Plan goals
 - Tools to get affordable housing on site

Planning Board Members' Areas of Interest:

Aaron Brockett

I'm mainly addressing the concept of revising the site review criteria that was mentioned in Tim and Macon's motion, but I have some additional thoughts as well:

- Should we fine-tune the zoning in certain areas to ensure that we are getting the developments that we are looking for? For example, the MU and Main Street zones (BMS), to my knowledge, allow mixed use developments, but don't require them. BC zones allow for neighborhood serving retail, but don't require it, etc.
- Similarly, I think the Use tables could use some changes. For some areas of the city, we may want to allow a more limited set of uses to accomplish the city's goals; in others, we may want to allow some additional uses.
- What changes could we make to the code to incentivize smaller residential units? I would like to see an analysis of which requirements in the code have an effect on unit size. We should move towards eliminating requirements that encourage larger units and adding incentives for smaller units. Maybe this means removing open space per unit rules, or dwelling unit per acre rules, and switching to an FAR based system. I'm not sure of the best approach, but would like to explore alternatives.
- One of Tim and Macon's items addressed public benefit and whether it should be defined in the code. Currently, I don't think public benefit is in the Site Review criteria, but it does come into play in annexations and some other situations. It would be very helpful to have a definition of public benefit for those situations where it is a criterion.
- The rest of my comments are about the Site Review criteria:
 - I would like to see the word minimize removed from the criteria. It's too extreme -- in many cases minimize would mean removing something entirely, which isn't necessarily practical. Examples are F(iii) (minimizing shadows) and F(xi) (minimizing energy use).
 - Speaking of F(xi), I would like to get clarity on what minimizing and mitigating energy use consists of. This criterion deals with important city (and world!) goals and it's important to take the right approach while avoiding arbitrariness.
 - D(iv) says we should minimize the amount of land devoted to the street system, but this contradicts our desire to break up super blocks and have a fine-grained street network. I would like to see this changed to encourage the creation of narrower streets that allow for the coexistence of different travel modes.
 - F(i) and (ii) talk about compatibility with the character of the area and the height being in general proportion to the height of existing buildings. It would be helpful to have some guidelines to what constitutes compatibility and being in general proportion.
 - I(i) lists certain zones that allow for intensity modifications. Are there other zones in the city that could benefit from similar allowed modifications?
 - K(ii) lists the criteria for allowing parking reductions. Can we add references to shared, unbundled and paid parking?
 - k and l address the criteria for allowing minor modifications and amendments to approved site plans. Could we add the requirement to notify Planning Board of any allowed mods/amendments? It wouldn't have to be subject to call-up, but could be helpful for the process to see what changes are being approved.

Bryan Bowen

- I think most of this conversation ought to be couched in terms of community livability - what makes this a wonderful, sustainable, and vibrant place? I also think we ought to pursue clarifying all of this through the comp plan update rather than putting forth a separate parallel process. The city does a lot of outreach, and I think their current trend toward more visualization is a good thing.
- By-right vs discretionary review: risky topic, as always, but I think allowing more by-right projects to happen under tighter regulations might be best. Just ask for whatever it is that we want, and allow Site Review to deal with the real variation. It'll ease things for the development community and reduce staffs workload.

Affordability is a big issue - which leads me to ask that we explore whether a site review criteria can be made to keep affordable housing on-site when important. There are certainly cases when we still need cash-in-lieu, mostly small or overtly luxury buildings. We're all aware that there are legal hurdles here, but I think we'd like to elevate the conversation to consider changing our ordinance to do what we can without being in conflict with state laws.

- I also think we ought to codify ways if increasing affordability passively: smaller units, cooperative housing (a high priority for me), pocket neighborhoods, cohousing, allowing unrelated adults to live together legally, OAU and ADUs. Beyond that, I think it's worth considering whether BHP can expand its programs to a wider band width of the market, up to 125% AMI, to help bridge the gap between the top of the affordable range and the bottom of the market.
- While I like data and analysis as much as the next guy, I'm a little leery of attempts to quantify concrete goals such as a population cap, thinking that the unforeseen consequences are likely to be pretty big as things change over time. I am not sure we have a complex enough model to be highly accurate in its predictions.
- I don't personally think that additional "community benefit" ought to be tied to increases in height or density, rather that all developments pull their own weight in terms of paying for their impacts, serving community sustainability and affordability goals, and providing for art and creative funkiness. I don't think a three story building is inherently better than a four story building, it's just a matter of design and urban form.
- As they are now, the Use Review tables in the LUC need to be refined and probably simplified. In some areas they need to be made more restrictive to ensure we get what we want - assuming that other uses can still be allowed through Use Review - and in other cases they need to become more permissive so that mixed use neighborhoods can stay more vital and adaptive.
- Regarding the 3-D model - I think it's a good idea to help the public and applicants understand what the zoning allows, though that happens at the risk of leading to projects that always go for the max. I think such a model would need to reflect what things aren't likely to change as well - it's really different to imagine the whole of Pearl Street going to 55' (which can't happen) vs what's possible, meaning that it needs to show what's protected by landmarking as well as anything that's over 50 years old, contributing, or in historic districts. This seems like a big undertaking, but it might be best as an outsourced low resolution study. I think that some of the neighborhoods would feel more at ease if they understood that there isn't a plan in place that allows greater intensity to flood over them.

John Gerstle

Among the topics I would like to include are:

- A discussion of the manner in which "community benefit" should be considered and evaluated in PB decisions - for example, in decisions concerning allowable building height.io
- A discussion of Boulder's goals and objectives with regard to employment and growth, location of commercial activities, and physical form of our town with respect to desired density and transportation goals, and how this should be taken into account by the Planning Board in its consideration of individual project proposals.

Crystal Gray

Do by right projects result in better design than projects that go through discretionary review? Comparisons and examples would be helpful.

Yes- if you have the underlying zoning designed to achieve what you want. An example is the MU-3 (Mixed Use) zone on Pearl from 18th to Folsom. Besides an occasional Use Review we rarely get a site review in this area yet there is infill and redevelopment that achieve the goals of the MU-3 zone. The MU-3 zone might be a good example for some BC zones or 'strip malls' that are changing or we want to encourage to change - create a zone that accomplishes what Community Business should be especially for the surrounding neighborhood and eliminate exceptions that do not achieve the BC goals. Tweak those things that are barriers to providing real community businesses.

Process changes that would lead to improvement of the public realm and the design of better buildings.

Adopt more area plans, neighborhood plans and 'area plans light' so projects will be within an agreed upon vision for the area.

Make sure that neighborhood meetings are led by the Neighborhood and Planning Department and not the developer. Zoning information can be presented in an unbiased manner, the public can be educated as to what is allowed by right, what is an exception and what is the process.

Concept Reviews should be required, even in amendments to existing PUD's, and applicants should be encouraged to check back in with PB, without additional fees, if they want to 'test' their new/ revised concept.

Change site review exceptions (height, density, setbacks, etc) need to have defined community benefit.

Take a look at the zoning and make sure the allowed uses achieve the urban design goals - an example is downtown where what is allowed as a use by right on the ground floor (banks, offices) might not achieve the goals of having a lively community space with retail, restaurants, and yes -movie theaters. Narrow the uses allowed by right and make the others by use review or we are going to lose the character of downtown. Of course - ask the downtown businesses, property owners and neighbors what would help keep downtown the 'heart' of Boulder.

Process changes that would lead to increased predictability in the review process;

See above - Adopt area Plans, meaningful neighborhood outreach and meetings, and zoning that achieves the vision. Review zoning districts and eliminate exceptions that do not achieve the goals of the zone. The predictable process is use by right but properties are now priced on potential for exceptions. - this is beyond our control except to make changes in the exceptions.

Are there changes to Site Review Criteria that would make discretionary review more effective and lead to better buildings, taking into account the roles of both BDAB and Planning Board?

Effective changes, from my PB standpoint, would be to have a mechanism that requires the ‘aspirations’ that a developer presents to PB be a part of the site review approval. Too often we hear goals such as will provide ‘affordable housing’, or ‘middle income’ housing, or ‘micro units’, or ‘micro offices’, or ‘artists work space’ or movie theaters, or an ‘active’ community plaza or ‘better connections’ and even ‘design visioning’ that has little resemblance to what is presented in the final site review- you get the point. Nothing in the site review right now can require these ‘aspirations’ to be achieved so there should be changes that allow PB to require these ‘aspirations’ as part of approval. See the list of Site Review Criteria changes below.

What has been the role of “community benefit” in obtaining entitlements and does the term need to be defined in the Code?

Yes the ‘community benefit’ term needs to be defined in the code. The role of “community benefit” use to be in the code but some where (I think in the 1990’s) was actually removed from the height exception criteria. We need to have it back in the Land Use code and defined for all exceptions - including the growth management exceptions.

Comment on the feasibility of creating a 3-D model that would demonstrate the current zoning capacity of the City?

The Downtown Alliance did a similar exercise showing what buildout would look like - it led to zoning changes because of the realization that the downtown did not have the infrastructure or capacity to absorb the build out that was allowed by right. It was a wake up moment and some of the downtown was actually ‘downzoned’. A model would also show the greater context of projects as well as helping define the context for city projects and plans. We could avoid projects that seem out of place for their context.

POLICIES / TOOLS

Topic

Height modifications:

Community benefit should be a requirement (criteria) for height modification. Benefit could be: more affordable housing, targeted moderate affordable housing, energy conservation/renewables beyond code requirements, public open space, non-profit benefits (office space), community meeting space, preservation of unique features, neighborhood retail, actualization of 15 min. neighborhood etc,

Density and density bonuses:

See above: Should have requirement that units be smaller (more intensity) if density bonus is requested and not just have a larger building. Tie it to specific site review criteria.

Design and aesthetics:

Design should have to respond to the context the project is in and should have urban design elements that make it interesting on all sides. Requirement for durable materials - not just have an ‘aspiration’.

Growth management:

Re-examine the exceptions - are we getting real mixed use projects or does an residents only ‘exercise room’ count as mixed use and thus an exception.

Fees/taxes:

This is the big question! Does development put a burden on the existing property owners or does development pay for the needed infrastructure and public facilities that are required. Put this on the work program!

Micro units:

Describe these and add a mechanism that can make them a requirement of site review and not just an 'aspiration'.

Existing housing

Involve neighborhoods in this discussion!

Examine zones where ADU's (*attached* Accessory Dwelling Units) and OAU's (*detached* Owner Accessory Units) can be expanded - within the existing FAR requirement. Examine what 'tweaks' might improve these units (don't count stairs or upstairs decks in the 450 sq. ft. for OAU's, look to expand alley coverage if historic structures are preserved), allow on smaller lots if unit is proportionally smaller and allow a slightly larger OAU for larger lots (over 14,000 sq. ft.),

Allow subdivision to preserve a small house on a non-conforming lot if small house is landmarked. For encouraging landmarking of homes allow for an OAU.

Try a pilot program, from a volunteer neighborhood, for 6 unrelated senior houses and evaluate it in one year.

Smaller residential units

Ask the various neighborhoods for their suggestions!

Allow for 'family friendly' type projects i.e. town-homes and single family type homes at a 2-1 ratio within the allowed FAR. Allow for 2 Tiny (250 sq. ft) homes to be build instead of one OAU at 450 sq. ft. Allow large lots (over 14,000 sq. ft) to have cluster of tiny homes or small units.

Zoning

Ask neighborhoods what would help reduce their car travel - is it changing the adjacent zoning to encourage more neighborhood services, making streets safer for peds and bikes, etc.

Look at zones to see if they are producing by-right developments that meet the definition of the zone - especially BC. Don't be afraid to come up with a new zone if the developments are not producing the right outcome.

By-right development

Make sure the zone is producing the desired outcome and if it needs to be tweaked do that - eliminate exceptions that are inconsistent with the zone goals.

Community benefit

Define community benefit for all exceptions and include it in site review criteria

Demographics

Include in all area plans the goal of having diversity in the uses - from housing to neighborhood retail to commercial to industrial so you have all types of

Offsite affordable housing

The city should encourage on-site affordable housing to meet at least 10% of the IH requirements - this is now allowed and was done during the first years of the program. The manager can once again require

this. If housing is allowed to be done off site it should be of similar quality as the project and nearby - unlike what happened with 29 North's requirement that ended up in North Boulder.

Mobile home parks

A plan should be developed with occupants of MHP's to transition to homes on a foundation. Ask the occupants.

Water

All annexations should be put on hold until a real water analysis is done on our supply showing consequences to existing businesses and property owners during various drought levels if the annexation was approved.

Qualitative guidance

What does this mean?

Site review,

See many comments above - bottom line is there should be enforceable criteria to define community benefit for exceptions and a mechanism so a developer's 'aspirations' can be a requirement.

Use review

Make all uses on the ground floor in the downtown a use review unless it is retail, restaurant - or some other use the downtown groups deem important to the vitality of downtown.

The most contentious neighborhood meetings are for liquor approvals up on the Hill. Have these meetings be run by the staff and not the applicant.

Discretionary review

See comments on Community benefit, Site Review -

Leonard May

Suggested issues to put on our joint CC meeting agenda:

- Council direct community dialogue of where we want to be population wise and form wise in 50 years
- Council direct 3d modeling of potential buildout including all available FAR and height bonuses. Further, access according that buildout, what it portends for population, worker spaces, traffic and congestion, and water resources use/availability etc.
- Revise land use code based on feedback from above to control pace, scale, type and quantity of residential and nonresidential development and track to gauge progress relative to goals and limits rising from above.
- Introduce metrics into city goals rather than vague aspirations such as diversity of housing types for a diversity of income groups. Establish specific housing types for specific income ranges for specific resident groups. Are we for example building the types of housing at the affordability levels to attract a diversity of workers to support our economy and foster diversity
- Establish desired ranges for non commercial space and business types.
- Dashboard tracking of development to indicate their progression toward total buildout for amount of space for each use type.

- Dashboard tracking of greenhouse gas emissions including those from proposed development and whether we stay on track for 80% FHFG reduction
- Regulation more directly reflect BVCP goals

General Topics for Discussion:

1. Site review criteria issues
2. Height and area bonuses:
 - Availability directly linked to specifically defined benefits.
 - Also, define which areas bonuses are to be allowed and to what extent they should exist in any allowed area. For example, limit 55' height increase to no more than X% (I prefer 30%) of a project's buildable site area. Limit area increases to X% of the by-right underlying zoning entitlement.
 - Explicitly state intent of bonuses - if bonuses are intended to be available to the max for entire project as defacto by right entitlements just by entering into site review or if the intent is to have bonuses "up to" the upper limit depending on the degree to which they comply with criteria.
 - Do not call height and area "modifications" as such - they are bonuses or exceptions and therefore to earn them, something exceptional must be offered.
 - Also require net zero for any construction portion beyond by right.
3. Design:
 - Specific requirement and stated intention that projects are high quality design. No more acceptance of poor projects complying with criteria - that the goal is to create nondescript background projects.:
4. BVCP:
 - Specific reference for each criteria for consistency with BVCP and applicable area plans and guidelines for project location.
5. Administrative:
 - PB callup option for all minor site review modifications
6. Get what you thought you were getting:
 - All suggestions of intent made for site review such as on site affordable housing to be commitments bound by site review approval. Don't offer if cant provide.
 - Tie use to site review.

Liz Payton

Responses to select items in the Cowles-Plass motion:

a. Do by right projects result in better design than projects that go through discretionary review? Comparisons and examples would be helpful.

I don't have enough experience yet to comment on this except to say that at least by-right projects are subject to the applicable design guidelines, if there are any.

b. Process changes that would lead to improvement of the public realm and the design of better buildings.

Design issues are very difficult to resolve at a public hearing. Staff does a fabulous job of analyzing every aspect of a proposal, but the architecture often needs more tweaking than we can do at PB. Is design excellence something we can put in the site review criteria? I don't know. Perhaps Council and the City Manager could ensure that staff is empowered to say no, regardless of the fees paid and pressure applied by the applicant, to projects and aspects of projects that don't serve the community well. Ultimately, the customer is the community, not the applicant.

The reaction of the public to recent development projects is partly about how unattractive they are. There were plenty of voices defending density but did anyone from the public defend the 29 North, Solana, or Landmark Lofts projects specifically? Staff should feel completely empowered to send designs back as many times as necessary to get an excellent design to recommend to PB.

If staff isn't empowered to say no, then it should not have to recommend projects for approval. Requiring staff to provide a recommendation has always seemed odd to me. It puts the analysts in the position of being advocates.

c. Process changes that would lead to increased predictability in the review process;
The flexibility gained with site review is a mixed bag for both the community and the developers. The changing composition of the board and council shifts the pendulum every few years. More teeth in the code, especially with respect to community benefit and design, would make the changing PB and CC composition have less impact on outcomes.

Also, every area of the city should have a set of design guidelines that staff, PB and developers could use to guide design of a project. Several Boulder neighborhoods have benefitted greatly from design guidelines, but there are still huge gaps, and some design guidelines need refreshing. For example, the North Boulder Subcommunity Plan itself has just one very broad design guideline (street forward design) and doesn't address materials, form, mass or scale.

d. Are there changes to Site Review Criteria that would make discretionary review more effective and lead to better buildings, taking into account the roles of both BDAB and Planning Board?
Of course, if we do have design guidelines, as suggested above, we need to make sure that their provisions are incorporated into the site review criteria. By not including all of the provisions of applicable design guidelines into the site review criteria we are losing the benefit of a lot of community process and buy-in. I'm thinking specifically of the way area-specific open space guidelines are excluded from the site review criteria but there are probably others.

The written comments and minutes from BDAB that I have seen so far have been very helpful.

e. What has been the role of "community benefit" in obtaining entitlements and does the term need to be defined in the Code?
It would certainly make some PB members more comfortable approving projects if the community benefit that is proposed could be legally bound to the approval. That would require definitions, I assume.

Height modifications

There doesn't seem to be much nuance to the requests for height modifications, as though the maximum is always the most compatible with the context.

It would be helpful to have more contextual imaging and modeling to assess whether a particular height modification request will enhance the street and neighborhood or, instead, make it less coherent and potentially introduce a new barrier to the evolution of a cohesive neighborhood. Introducing a maxed-out building to a neighborhood of mostly 2-story buildings will define a new edge to the neighborhood. What are the consequences of creating that new edge?

Design and aesthetics

Staff needs to be empowered to send back bad designs as often as necessary to achieve attractive buildings. Iterative tweaking is not something we can do at site review. This is especially important for large buildings, which have a bigger impact on the community.

Demographics

Are we creating neighborhoods? I applaud the move toward smaller units. It's a huge step in the right direction. But we have to pay attention to how many units and of what type. Brent Toderian says, "Children are the indicator species of healthy neighborhoods." Most of the units being built now are suitable for singles—not seniors or families. One of the operators of the Solana development said that most of their units were being leased by "tech guys," and almost no families. Will the Boulder Junction area be a neighborhood? Or will it be a tech boys' Neverland?

The incommuter survey told us that we might be able to capture some of the incommuting workforce if we could provide duplexes and triplexes with a bit of yard. It wouldn't be as many units as you might get in very dense multi-unit housing, but it would add diversity to the demographics served. It's important to focus on creating neighborhoods, with the amenities that children and families need. The rest will fall into place.

John Putnam

Provisions to support use of electric and/or other alternatively fueled vehicles with charging readiness (BRC 9-2-14(h)(2)(D) or (E))

Extent to which housing variety needs to be provided in each project or just each neighborhood (BRC 9-2-14(h)(2)(F)(vii))

Clarify status of lighting plans for site review approval, insofar as they usually don't come until tech docs (BRC 9-2-14(h)(2)(F)(ix))

Clarify requirements for renewable energy projects; update for consideration of energy districts or other tools 9-2-14(h)(2)(F)(xi)

Create standard (possibly form-based) in 9-2-14(h)(2)(F) for simplicity in design and materials choice

Standards for Minor Amendments and Minor Modifications to assure plan fidelity on materials, design, etc. (BRC 9-2-14(k)-(l))