

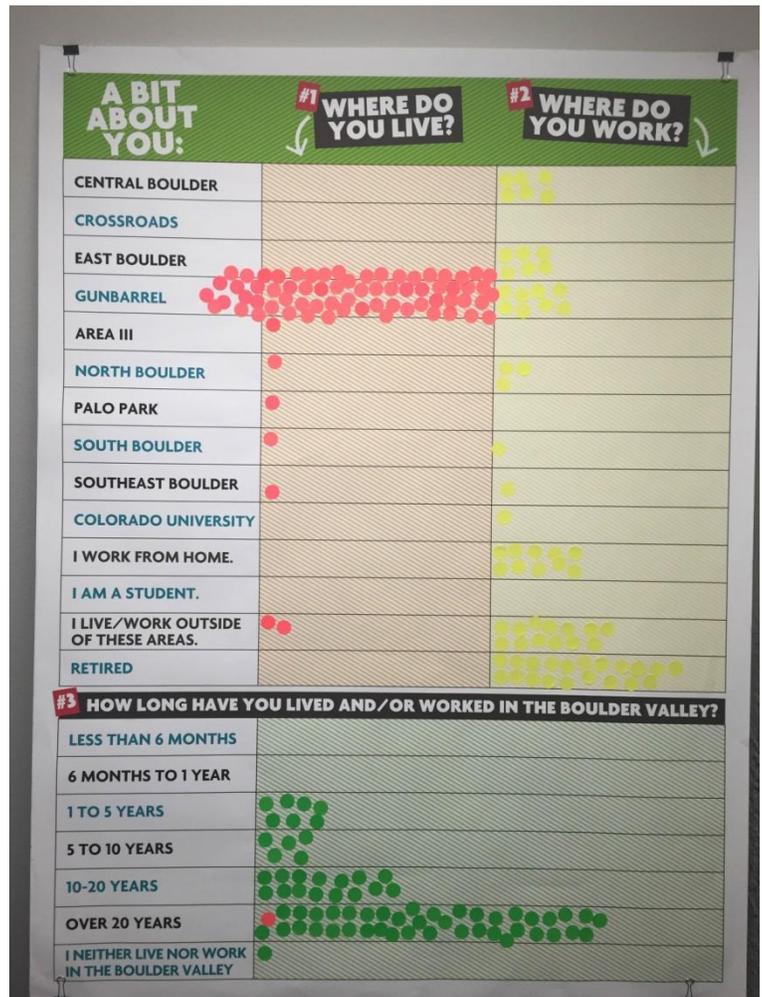
Gunbarrel & Area III Listening Session
December 7, 2015
Meeting Summary and Discussion Notes



The purpose of the local community “listening sessions” is to invite community members to share concerns, questions, and ideas related to the update of the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP) as well as city (and county) services and programs. Sessions have been scheduled for six locations around the community and include an open house with a variety of information on a range of city programs and projects from many departments. These are followed by a short BVCP presentation with round table discussions following. Demographic information from the meetings is included below.

In the **round table discussions**, people were asked to suggest key topics for longer group discussion. The longer discussion topics selected are listed below in bold with summary notes.

Suggested topics for discussion in the Gunbarrel & Area III meeting: Twin Lakes Proposal, Equity, High Density Housing, Growth, Open Space, Neighborhood Amenities, Housing Diversity, Neighborhood Character, Gunbarrel Center, Ecological Resilience, Hydrology, Traffic Congestion, Planning, Fracking, Trail Connections, Prairie Dogs, Connectivity, Agricultural Tradition, Environmental Resiliency, Climate Change, Conservation, Improving Bike Infrastructure, Gray Area between City & County, Annexation, Comprehensive Plan, and Natural Ecosystems.





Topics	Summary Notes from Gunbarrel and Area III
Growth In Gunbarrel	
Representation	Lack of representation but feel impacts - Gunbarrel residents' input into the decision-making process. Gunbarrel as dumping ground because people are without a voice.
Town Center	Gunbarrel Town Center - areas around King Soopers. The gathering place is for the residents not for the Gunbarrel Community only for the single development. There was no opportunity for input into the community center.
Town Center Housing	Town Center development was allowed with less open space than is required in the city (equity). Affordable housing was transferred out of the development. The 20% went on 28th street in boulder leaving GB without affordable units.
Affordable Housing Exemptions	City should stick to 10% in all development not all grouped into one place. Grouping is unsafe (came from someone who lived in affordable housing). No more cash in lieu or transfer. Spread the affordable housing around. Exceptions given to developers at various steps including height, aff. housing, parking. Slipping through the requirements. Granting huge #s of exemptions.
Development	Development in the floodplain *Google - example along Boulder Slough - exemptions in these areas. "By-right development" can be done in Boulder.
Design	Don't like the move to flat roofs because they can get more house that way. Need more consideration for design and visual diversity and compatibility.
Fees	Numbers and scale (size) of exemptions and variances. Notice regarding changes. Representation - no one on City Council lives in GB. Fees at city are exorbitant - can't make simple changes to the commercial structure without huge fees.

Services	Confusion around who provides services. Police respond to emergencies.
Nature and Rate of Growth	Want a community designed and developed based on input (Common, well-designed area; visually appealing, walkable). Proactively create a gathering space for the Gunbarrel Community.
Gunbarrel Center	Gunbarrel "Center" should be central - stay within developed Gunbarrel - not an amoeba. Gunbarrel Master Plan update - should be a gathering space, accessible to community.
Open Space within Neighborhoods	"Undeveloped areas" within neighborhoods - what this could be left up to the neighborhoods. Conversion of Gunbarrel from rural to city. Proximity but not with the city a valuable aspect. Food cart rodeo as an example.
Twin Lakes	
Twin Lakes	Lives on the north part of Twin Lakes Road. There are flooding issues, both 2013 and periodically. Who pays for flooding?
Traffic on TL	Future development may compound the issue. Isn't thrilled about new development but it isn't the primary issue.
Studies	Hydrology report should be done before development. Wildlife studies should be done too. Studies should be done before too much planning goes on. Process is backward.
Character	Zoning changes are not characteristic with neighborhood. Currently much lower density. 180 units on 10 acres is not consistent with neighborhood / community. Island of annexation (enclave). Way city is going about it is inconsistent with original intent.
Flood & Groundwater	More extreme events are causing increased flooding. Drainage issues already exist, soils aren't appropriate. More development compounds the issues and impacts existing residents. Even drainage improvements won't work because downstream issues will still exist. This area rated poorly for dealing with water and drainage. The whole area was wetlands in the past.
Lack of Trust	City and county may be opening themselves to legal recourse from the residents. Some residents have sump pumps already in their basements. This will only get worse. Storm sewer lines have already failed and development will make it worse. Problem is widespread, not just immediately adjacent to the Twin Lakes.
Displacement of Owls	What happens to wildlife if we build? Seems like we would run it out of town. Bird-watching is currently a big use for the land.
Wildlife	It's the "park" for the community. It's in the heart (center) of the neighborhood. Close to contiguous wildlife corridor from N. Gunbarrel to Jay Rd. Concerned that there is a lot of opposition, but the city will go ahead anyway. Concerned that the developer will get biased reports.

Twin Lakes	
Transportation / Traffic	Development along a single-entry roadway, potential for increased volume of traffic. Residents noted that there is no transit service to this area and that the lack of this type of service makes the site a poor choice for affordable housing where such services are integral to affordable living. Increased risks to pedestrian uses currently taking place along this narrow travel corridor.
Hydrology / Groundwater	May affect sewer lines. There are already water main breaks currently; can additional development handle that? Steel piping breaks. Not PVC as utilities notes. Residents called for a comprehensive groundwater assessment to consider the impacts of additional development and the ways subsurface disruptions could create additional groundwater impacts on surrounding homes.
Open Space	Area has natural habitat. What are the effects on the foxes, owls? People support maintaining more open space. Possible public/private partnership to maintain land, open spaces. Also for recreation use. There is no other natural park in the area for play. Could a rec center be used as alternative development? Trail through area to connect to trails to Boulder. Residents noted the important wildlife connectivity corridor that the TL site provides between the park to the north and the open space to the south.
Representation	True nature of representation - opposing views from the plan should be considered. Sentiment that there is not true representation from Council. Lack of trust in the process - it feels one sided.
Affordable Housing	Lack of amenities for affordable housing. If more housing, need: supermarket, pharmacy, gas station, banks, more commercial, clarity of jurisdiction with police/fire. Exacerbation of issues if housing is built.
Affordable Housing	Boulder was supposed to have affordable units near the grocery store, but they used the "opt-out" clause. BVCP info sent to all HOAs but the one in Gunbarrel. Gunbarrel is already an affordable community. How does TLAC go through the process to get their desired out come? People making the decision don't come here. Form a taxation group to buy the land. Stop the annexation / zoning; give the citizens time to determine what they want.
Character	
Trail Connectivity	Like separated trails rather than on-street. Some motorists aren't always respectful; Jay Rd. is a barrier (Spine to Cottonwood Trail) between good trails. No safe way to ride out of Gunbarrel. Families won't bike commute with kids to Boulder because it is too dangerous. 63rd toward the Res is dangerous too. Shoulders too small on 63rd / and res. Bus takes too long to get to downtown Boulder - not a viable options.

Character	Gunbarrel Center - concerned it's an urban center; concerned that level of density is what's coming to the rest of Gunbarrel and it would be too much. Concerned if Gunbarrel is annexed, this community won't have a voice at council because there isn't a ward system. Would be represented by people who don't understand the local issue. Affordable housing is needed but Gunbarrel Center doesn't have any affordable units. Could have been 50-60 units of affordable housing at Gunbarrel Center.
Character	Concerned about knee-jerk reactions, not being well represented. Decisions negatively impact the character of the neighborhood. Zoning in place for a reason - affordable housing should fit in with existing zoning and with existing neighborhood. Integrated affordable housing would be better for everyone. Affordable housing should consider amenities available. Should be closer to grocery store.
Density	Concerned about density in Gunbarrel Center. This would have been better area for affordable housing. Likes Twin Lakes natural area. Concerned more density can't be supported by available infrastructure. Land values enabled development.
Neighborhood Services	Post office is in a gift shop next to Quiznos. Don't have the amenities for more people - Gunbarrel isn't a city. No place to get basic services like hardware since Sutherland went out of business. Don't have a town hall - go to the fire station to use a room as a gathering space.
Change	Concerned the future of the community will look like Gunbarrel Center. Would like to see more amenities (but not library or rec centers - go to Boulder / Longmont) such as restaurants. Commuting traffic is a concern. Thinks people would sacrifice amenities for character-keeping. Thinks the same is an adequate trade-off. Would rather bike/drive further to get to amenities than have urban-level densities.
Characteristics of the Neighborhood	Like single-family homes; high density wouldn't be a good fit. Good place to ride bikes and trick or treat for kids. Like knowing neighbors. Like being able to ride in the street.
Density	Plan should match the current zone. Shift from lower to higher density. Building the density - unincorporated is scary because of precedent of more development.
Local Environmental Protection	
Climate Change	This subject is broad. It includes mineral fracking, open space, sustainability, environmental protection, and agricultural use / character, among other concerns/issues.
Impacts of Extra Growth	Growth affects the amount and type of use on Open Space. It also affects transportation. High density poses a threat to environmental beauty and local quality of life.
Neighborhood Voice	Participants would like the city to actually listen to neighborhoods - not try convincing them. We would like a voice in the process that directs the changes affecting our communities.

Threat of Fracking	Participants are worried that both county and city will bend to oil prices after moratorium ends in 2 1/2 years. Most would like to see the moratorium extended despite likely high prices. Gunbarrel: Open, beautiful environment - let's protect it. Protect trails, water, open space. Feel open space is not actually protected – at least that portion is that isn't owned by the city or county.
Mineral Rights	Why can't we protect local mineral rights? Face enormous opposition from energy companies. Area 3 - unclear what land use policies are in effect and where. Worried about other entities grabbing land. Transfer development rights, zoning, and land use are all concerns.
Municipalization & Annexation	Tragedy of Gunbarrel development. Many participants would like to see no Annexation by the city around Gunbarrel**
Bike Trail	Connect Gunbarrel & COB bike networks to make a safer, more feasible route of transportation. Need a more direct route.
Flood Recovery	Longmont is a total failure. Examples: Terrible flood recovery effort; floodouts, infrastructure damage slowly repaired, if at all. Participants would like to see Gunbarrel and COB avoid these same mistakes.
Environmental Protection	Wetland protection is really important. Once wetlands are gone, they're gone. Neighborhoods deserve voice in these policies (e.g. prairie dog regulation). White Rocks needs robust protections.
Neighborhood Voice	
Neighborhood Voice	Developers paying for loopholes through plan codes? Bypasses citizen / neighborhood voice. Specifically related to affordable housing requirements - should be on-site and include neighborhood voice more consistently. Address loopholes in Comp Plan so that what actually happens reflects the political will expressed in the plan.
Growth Impacts	Gunbarrel has grown relatively faster - problematic when the voice of the residents of lower growth areas express approval of high growth. Disconnect between city and county on regional housing goals (i.e. if not enough affordable housing in city then county does it in Twin Lakes). this should be covered by the Comp Plan. If this is not addressed could lead to cessation or annexation. Problematic disenfranchisement of county residents right outside the city limits. Should lead to annexation conversation.
Infrastructure	High density affordable housing without sufficient infrastructure is not good. City needs to consider infrastructure for all new developments.
Listening	How to promote neighborhood voice? Listening sessions that feel open (no foregone conclusions). Establish a voting mechanism for cross jurisdictional decisions (city/county) e.g. Gunbarrel improvement district.
Twin Lakes	
Hydrology	Groundwater mitigation occurring in the area already? How can you build so irresponsibly? Evidence - special water protection of paving of Twin Lakes Road. (Spoke with engineer: "Crazy to build".)

Infrastructure and Urban Services	Adding to the Lookout Road development: a great deal of activity vis a vis growth. "Town Center". Contradiction or seeming contradiction between the.. Transportation is limited, and traffic in a residential neighborhood - Transit non-existent at Twin Lakes / Kalua
Natural Values	92 - 63% prime farmland - remaining is farmland of statewide importance. See natural ecosystem information other page.
Consistency with Comp Plan	Concerned about annexation without representation **. Flagpole annexation to city. Rural area - not urban per housing commitment.
Open Space	It should be OS. Proximity, prime ag land, wildlife habitat, scenic and riparian, land that could provide trail connection - meets all of county OS acquisition criteria.
Trust and Transparency	Commissioners and Boulder Housing Authority are the same people. How can the commissioners be impartial on a housing-related issue?
Solutions	Eaton Park Site or TDRs - Alternative potential development site.
Twin Lakes	
Current Policy Direction	Tolly Ho Resident - Take policy commitments seriously! Feels like this has been a "done deal" with no public input. They have 2013 architectural drawings. Feels like people have been given less than the truth.
Hydrology	Most people say it was a mistake to build the Twin Lakes Condos in the wetlands - many problems with groundwater. Input by hydrologist - hope it isn't a waste of time. Fear "done deal". Brandon Creek Apts - wetlands filled - had to do mitigation for wetlands. Flooding on Tally Ho resulted in costly renovations and the sump pumps don't ever stop.
Quality of Neighborhood	Came from California because we love this place: "gem", low traffic, safe, quiet, kids have freedom. We choose this experience. Putting in any housing will upset the apple cart. Values will go down. Look at investment. People can't sell their homes right now.
Quality of Neighborhood	As a new home owner, want to get involved. Love Twin Lakes. Agree with others - like peaceful environment of this neighborhood, frustrated about misinformation; mistrust.
Quality of Neighborhood	Neighborhood is relaxed, already see impact of development with increased traffic. Concerned for owls, additional impact will change that.
Plan for Area	BVCP is being driven by small group rather than plan driving land use in a low density area. Should be top down - plan directing the land use.
Property Values	Concerned about property values. Not fair to pit neighborhood against affordable housing. Like to see land use driven by broader look at the area.
Affordable Housing	Seems like there is an artificial requirement for #s of affordable units. Put housing near services, transportation. If the goal is 10% don't put in county annexing county OS - put it in the city. Can't trust anything.
Affordable Housing	Not sure the "crisis" is a "crisis". Shouldn't allow developers to opt out of units. Doesn't seem equitable for developers to opt out.

Issues with Twin Lakes Site	I walk my dog in this area and the views are magnificent. These will be gone if 3 story buildings are built. Leap-frog annexation with bad hydrology. The site is away from existing services. Build where the jobs are - closer in Boulder. Why not around King Soopers?
Commissioners	How come the County Commissioners say policies are right or not - acting as heads of the Housing Authority. They are acting as builders. Expect Commissioners to act in our interest - protect us. Maybe have some other body direct.
Longevity	Newer residents feel the same as those who have been here longer.
Quality of Neighborhood	Love building a sense of community, community feel - kids on the block are safe. There is pride in the neighborhood. When economy was down some homes were sold for affordable housing. There were issues about up-keep and pressure from the HOA. Concerned if this is all affordable housing there won't be the same pride in ownership as is in the neighborhood now.
BCHA	BCHA is a single-issue organization - not thinking about who they serve. There is no day care, services, grocery.. It is over a mile to nearest bus. There will be an incredible increase in traffic. There is no direct route.
Hydrology	Prairie dogs won't even make burrows because they fill with water. BCHA is oblivious to the science.
Benefits to Development of Site??	Maybe if it were a lower density - 3 stories. Make official park land but people prefer open space. Maybe senior housing. If it has to be developed - rather low density for seniors. 3 stories is not OK.
Fire Response	Concerned about response times from rural fire department.
Housing Authority	They say "we will listen" but everything to date has been counter to this sentiment. Feelings of outrage - decisions being made without your control.

Comments from Written and Online Comment Sheets

Do you have any ideas, concerns or questions about the area where you live or work? Let us know! If your comments regard specific areas of town, please indicate that clearly.

- I was unable to attend the listening session for the Gunbarrel area. I live at 4566 Tally Ho Trail in Gunbarrel and would like you to consider the following comments: 1) Twin Lakes affordable housing. Parcels along Twin Lakes Road slated for affordable housing development: zoning on these should not be changed to higher density; we should maintain the more rural feel of the Twin Lakes area and maintain traffic safety along Twin Lakes Road. Affordable housing in Boulder is absolutely important and in this area should be low-density homes or built mixed-use in the downtown Gunbarrel area. 2) Off street bike connections: Improve off-street bike connections from Gunbarrel to the rest of Boulder to the southwest. It's not safe for families to bike along 63rd St. or Jay Rd. to connect to Boulder proper. 3) LOBO trail: Improve bike and pedestrian connections from the Twin Lakes portion of the LOBO trail to the rest of the LOBO trail leading north to Niwot 4) Missing sidewalk links on Twin Lakes Road: Improve safety for pedestrians and bikes by filling in the missing links along Twin Lakes Road east of Spine. To get from Red Fox Hills and other neighborhoods to downtown Gunbarrel pedestrians and bikers

need to travel on Twin Lakes Rd. which is not a safe option currently. 5) Downtown: Long-term, give Gunbarrel a small town feel; develop streetscapes and areas to make it more like a traditional, small downtown area 6) Services lacking: With the massive growth in housing units in Gunbarrel in the last several years, the City should plan to increase services by developing a recreation center/community center/library/children's park/natural area. The Gunbarrel area is underserved in this arena and residents have to drive to other parts of Boulder for these services. Thank you for your consideration.

- Insufficient transit options to Gunbarrel area: I'm a proponent of incorporating radical (!) new ideas for mass transit in the city, combined with a community-wide eco-pass!
- If eco-passes were universal many of our traffic and parking problems would be resolved. Citizens would be more amenable to increased density if it didn't come with increased cars.
- Since the city looks at its rate of growth as it impacts the whole city, and most of the growth seems to be in specific areas (like Gunbarrel) there needs to be more community input as to how much growth can be built in a small area. With those in the community allowed to say "no" especially when the city allows developers to pay to break the rules. There has been too much growth in Gunbarrel.
- Boulder CO should buy the 20 acres on Twin Lakes Rd to make open space for the future – larger parcels are better. The Twin Lakes and Trails were never "wild" but are heavily used and loved and accessible – only trails to walk to for many.