

CITY OF BOULDER
PLANNING BOARD ACTION MINUTES
August 11, 2016
1777 Broadway, 1777 West Conference Room

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PLANNING BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

John Gerstle, Chair
Liz Payton, Vice Chair
Bryan Bowen
Leonard May
Crystal Gray
Harmon Zuckerman

PLANNING BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

John Putnam

STAFF PRESENT:

Lesli Ellis, Comprehensive Planning Manager
Jean Gatza, Senior Planner
Caitlin Zacharias, Planner I

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair, **J. Gerstle**, declared a quorum at 6:00 p.m. and the following business was conducted.

2. MATTERS FROM THE PLANNING BOARD, PLANNING DIRECTOR, AND CITY ATTORNEY

- A. AGENDA TITLE:** Continuance of Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan Update (BVCP)
Discussion on Selected Policy Changes, Amendment Procedures, and Community Engagement from July 28, 2016 Planning Board Meeting.

Staff Presentation:

L. Ellis and **J. Gatz** presented the items, gave an update, format for tonight's discussion, and summary of comments received from the Planning Board and other city boards.

Board Comments:

Topic #1: Natural Environment

- **J. Gerstle** suggested to extend the pesticide policies beyond city plans to private use.
- **L. Payton** stated that there were a few suggested ideas submitted to staff by the board regarding the Natural Environment that she would like to see become "standards" or new regulatory mechanisms rather than just aspirations. For example, the floodplain delineation, wetlands and groundwater policy should actually be implemented. In

addition, there is nothing currently in the Comp Plan regarding climate change and she would like to see it addressed.

- **B. Bowen** agreed that especially the groundwater policy needs to be clearer and resolved with regulations.
- The board was in agreement that climate change should be addressed within the Comp Plan.
- **B. Bowen** added that policy 3.11, *Urban Forests* should address food producing plant species landscaped within the city to create sustainability.
- In regards to the pesticide policy, the board agreed that it should be crafted so that it does not just pertain to the application to city properties but also privately (e.g. “bee-safe neighborhoods”).
- **J. Gerstle** added that the city should consider issuing permits for the use of pesticides to specify dosage, application, etc. In addition, the language within 3.04 should not focus solely on undeveloped land or public lands, but should refer to “all lands”. The board agreed.
- **B. Bowen** gave full support for carbon sequestration and having it in the Comp Plan.

Topic #2: Energy and Climate

- **L. Payton** stated the new wording does not necessarily reflect a policy so much as a statement of efforts. There wasn't a clear vision.
- **L. May** suggested adding something about conservation within the bullets section.
- **B. Bowen** emphasized “shared resources” and that it should be built into the policy. The board agreed.
- **H. Zuckerman** added that some current sections of this policy are too prescriptive. He read a sample of revisions and stated that they would make clear what the city and county support without providing levels of prescriptive language about how much and how we will support the goals. Often he removed the word “policies” and just left “programs and regulations” as things that the board supports because THIS is a policy, and it is meant not to support other policies, but actual programs and regulations.
- The board agreed.
- **C. Gray** added that the regulations and ideas around energy and climate have evolved dramatically in the past 5 years. The regulations and policies cannot stay stagnant and need to reflect that.
- **L. Payton** requested the wording in the policy regarding *Construction Waste* be stronger to encourage renovation over demolition. She proposed making the language sound as if demolition would be a last resort. The board was in agreement.
- **B. Bowen** suggested treating deconstruction materials as a resource to be reused in a variety of ways. The materials need to be thought of as a nutrient and not a waste.
- **L. May** stated that the current language talks about adaptation rather than changing behaviors to address the root causes of climate change. He asked that this be included in the bullet points section. The board agreed.

Topic #3: Economy

- **J. Gerstle** mentioned that he did not see reference to the costs of economic activities.
- In regards to the Creative Economy policy, the board generally was not in favor of it. **L.**

Payton added that she does want to support the artist community. **L. May** questioned why the Comp Plan should select a preferred occupation. **H. Zuckerman** argued that we are not singling out a preferred occupation and listed other valuable groups within Boulder's economy. **L. Payton** stated that the goal is to keep those groups from being pushed out and lost in the community. **C. Gray** suggested to not limit the language by saying "artists" but rather "residents and community" and broaden it to the variety of businesses in Boulder. **B. Bowen** added the most important aspect is to create a diverse and robust economy, but also allow the city to have a diverse workforce.

- **J. Gerstle** stated that in the process of redevelopment, many creative and light businesses are being lost. He asked that consideration be given to the creative and productive businesses.
- **C. Gray** mentioned that consideration should be given to small businesses and businesses owned by minorities and that the city develops strategies to specifically address this. The board agreed.
- **H. Zuckerman** suggested tying resilience strategy to the diversity of use types, people, income levels, etc.
- **C. Gray** asked that policy 5.01 be revised to tie the phrase referencing "incentivizing" to community benefit.
- **J. Gerstle** stated that policy 5.02 does not seem to be in accordance with the objectives of controlling job growth that the Comp Plan is trying to do. **L. May** added that job growth should be brought into context with the other factors that affect it. **H. Zuckerman** proposed the following language for the policy, "*The city supports strategies that further its role as a regional job center in the future with sustainability goals and projected growth.*" The board agreed to revisit this policy.
- **C. Gray** stated that she does not want "home occupations" to replace "residential units".

Topic #4: Transportation

- **L. Payton** stated that the Comp Plan could be clearer regarding the types of service that are being measured. Perhaps definitions need to be changed or updated.
- The board agreed that the flow and articulation of the chapter could be improved.
- **J. Gerstle** offered a new policy based on "distracted driving". He stated that it is not obvious that it belongs in the Comp Plan.
- **C. Gray** brought up the notion of people feeling safe as pedestrians or riding their bikes.
- **L. May** stated that the Comp Plan is the place to include this idea as it encompasses other aspects of the Transportation chapter.
- **B. Bowen** stated that "safety" should include any mode of transportation to anywhere in the city.
- **L. Payton** suggested to use the safety children as the target.
- **C. Gray** suggested having a statement regarding transportation impacting urban design.
- In regards to the 15-Minute Neighborhood, **C. Gray** proposed that the residents themselves in those neighborhoods should have a say as to what goes into their 15-Minute Neighborhood. **B. Bowen** proposed referencing them, but to talk about land use changes in another place, not the transportation chapter. **L. May** suggested it be pulled out altogether. **B. Bowen** argued that neighborhood connectivity is part of the 15-Minute Neighborhood discussion. **J. Gerstle** questioned the reality of a 15-Minute Neighborhood.

Topic #5: Community Well Being

- In regards to diversity, **L. Payton** brought up the notion of identifying the risks and challenges of groups within the community (i.e. seniors) to form policies for protection. The board agreed.
- **L. Payton** proposed a policy regarding firearms. **L. May** proposed a statement similar to the one found in the Transportation chapter stating that the goal would be zero deaths.

Topic #6: Ag and Food

- **C. Gray** stated that the city may not have the infrastructure to support ag.

Topic #7: Core Values

- **C. Gray** stated that the heart of the values would be “sensibility”.
- **L. May** would prefer to keep travel by cars as a current core value. **B. Bowen** and **C. Gray** agreed.
- **C. Gray** stated that keeping a thriving local business community is the heart of sustainability.
- **H. Zuckerman** suggested that the core values should use words that are goals and incentivize. Under each individual policy is where items will be defined and detailed. One word that is missing in the core values is “resilience”.
- **L. Payton** stated she finds the bullets problematic and does not know why they are needed. **J. Gerstle** agreed that the affect is weakened by including all the verbiage and appear broad.
- The board discussed the bullets and agreed to not disregard them completely but to embed them into the policies.

6. ADJOURNMENT

The Planning Board adjourned the meeting at 8:33 p.m.

APPROVED BY

Board Chair

DATE