



El Paso County
Falcon/Peyton Small Area Master Plan Update
Advisory Committee Meeting

2 April 2008: 3 – 5 pm

LOCATION: El Paso County Development Services Department
2nd Floor Conference Room
2880 International Circle Colorado Springs, CO 80910

ATTENDEES: Jason Alwine – Committee Vice Chair
Lynne Bliss – Committee Chair
Aaron Briggs – HB&A
Randy Case II – Marsheffel-Woodmen Inv. LLC
Dave Elliott – Committee Member
Natalie Gowen – New Falcon Herald
Tammy Jansma – Committee Member
Avia Kallage – HB&A
Bob Martin – LDC Inc.
Gregg Moran – Rock Springs Ranch
Steve Mulliken – Counsel for High Plains Ranch
Darsey Nicklasson – Committee Member
Tasha Norman – NES Inc.
Dave Powell – EPC Planning Commission Liaison
Henry Reitwiesner – Committee Member – SD 49 Liaison
Carl Schueler – El Paso County DSD
Dave Sealander – Committee Member
Tim Seibert – NES Inc.
Doug Shaw – HB&A
Judith P. Van Ahlefeldt – Black Forest Resident

MINUTES

- 1) Summary of Previous Meeting & Agenda for this meeting

[Aaron summarized the previous meeting on 3/12.](#)

Carl wanted to note that Henry Reitwiesner wrote up a letter summarizing the school district information for the plan. Henry clarified that this letter is currently a draft, and was not meant for wide release until it has been approved by the other school districts. The planning staff will use it for reference right now, but it won't be distributed until it is final.

2) Progress Report on Draft Plan

Doug Shaw gave an update on the progress of the draft plan.

HB&A has collected information provided so far, and created a spreadsheet to track what has been drafted and where gaps still exist. A few of the main data gaps are the economic development and housing sections, which HB&A will be researching over the next two weeks. There are also a couple of sections that we're waiting for more information on, such as school and fire districts. These information requests are out, and we expect responses soon. There are also significant portions of the plan that rely on information that is still under discussion right now, such as the future land use section.

Aaron added that Lynne has written a solid history section that we've incorporated into the plan.

3) Land Use and Density Recommendations – Potential Changes

Aaron started by summarizing where the committee left off last week, saying that the meeting attendees had noted that the recommendations needed to be re-evaluated. There were basically two areas (Rock Springs Ranch and High Plains Ranch) that asked for the committee's consideration in being treated as part of the urban pattern recommended in the plan.

Aaron described the areas that were under review and summarized the arguments made by the two developments.

High Plains Ranch cited a confluence of water, wastewater, and transportation infrastructure in their area, and that's the smartest place to build urban density development. The committee's reasoning in leaving the area out of the urban areas in the recommendations was based on a hesitation to plan for an urban density pocket separated from other urban densities by several miles.

Rock Springs Ranch cited a couple of reasons that the committee's reasoning should be adjusted. First, they recognized that our recommendation of a commercial center in Peyton would not be realistic unless urban services were extended to the area, and that some urban density residential development would be necessary to make that infrastructure extension feasible. Second, they noted that our urban areas actually included some existing rural-residential areas, and that this combination of different densities should be extended into the Peyton area.

Aaron noted that the committee should decide if there were any development factors that were incorrectly accounted for, and adjust our reasoning to account for these factors. It would be irresponsible to neatly draw a line around the two proposed developments, and the committee should re-apply the planning factors uniformly upon re-evaluating their importance.

Aaron described that there are basically 3 options for the committee:
Do nothing, aside from polishing and articulating the graphic a little bit more.

Leave the graphic essentially unchanged, but including some language to address these areas as “in-process” and setting some conditions for their approval at urban densities. Change the graphic and the policies.

Carl added that there may be a fourth alternative between #2 and #3, which would involve changing the policies a little bit, leaving the graphic essentially unchanged, but adding another layer to the map to indicate the impact of timing on the development. This would help to distinguish between areas that could support increased development at some point in time and areas that should never support increased development. If this timing factor were added to the map, then developments would have some basis in shortening the timeframe on certain parcels.

Carl handed out a document provided by N.E.S. Inc. that described their request for changes in the policies.

Aaron then described the alternative maps that were provided by HB&A. There were four graphics, meant to represent basic looks at how different planning factor priorities could change the shape of the recommendations.

Current – This alternative was a slightly more defined version of the recommendations that have previously been shown.

Utilities – This alternative looked at what the recommended development pattern would look like if proximity to water and wastewater services were the most important factor.

Nodes – This alternative looked at what development might look like if urban density nodes were allowed on the large land holdings in the area.

Synthesis – The synthesis alternative tried to account for the utilities, nodes, transportation, and alluvial aquifers. Nodes were located where the urban densities would not lie on top of alluvial aquifers, and therefore wouldn't threaten groundwater contamination through spills and/or runoff.

Carl noted that he has some new information about the future location of a Waste Water Treatment Plant in the area. Cherokee plans to build a new wastewater plant on the High Plains Ranch property. This could change the status of this area.

Bob Martin noted that the graphics are very important, and that if you're going to have a graphic, it should be accurate and illustrative.

Steve Mulliken confirmed what Carl had mentioned about the Waste Water Treatment Plant in the area, and thanked the committee and consultants for the extra work trying to bring the recommendations along. He reiterated some of the existing conditions of the High Plains Ranch project, and supported the idea of adding a layer that would reflect Carl's wording creating “future additional development area”.

Tim Seibert repeated that the graphic is the most important thing in the plan. He noted that the 1993 plan for the area allows for urban-density development in the Peyton area.

Carl walked through the text revisions that he came up with. Basically, the text says that based on the available capacity, the plan can accommodate all expected development. However, there will be pressure outside of the recommended areas for urban development, and if that pressure comes, and the developers can show that they can extend services and make a case for the development, then they'll need to figure out how to make it work, and the development can be viewed as consistent with the policies.

Tim Seibert asked how the plan would work for a development that was trying to build-out before its time, given that the developer can make the infrastructure work. Aaron

responded that the new revised recommendations would seek to allow for a way to move a development forward in time by meeting a higher standard.

Dave Sealander proposed that the area around Peyton seems to be a logical growth area, and that we should show it as one of these conditional development areas that, if services can be provided, could be developed at higher densities. These areas could be shown as a hatch pattern.

Aaron explained that many of the things Dave and Tim refer to are already covered by the current planning process. Even if a plan is consistent with the master plan, developers still have to show access to infrastructure in order to get the development approved. Because the development of an area in a manner that is inconsistent with the master plan changes the character of the area, it makes the surrounding properties more likely to develop outside of the master plan's recommendations as well. Part of the idea in allowing for future additional development areas is to raise the bar above what is typically provided in the planning process for these areas, so that they shoulder some of the community cost of changing the character in the area.

Tim Seibert commented that he would see a hatched area representing those parcels that could meet the standard for increased density. This would be a blend of urban and rural to be consistent with a character that isn't going to change.

Carl commented that there is a hierarchy of potential developable areas based on how much land is under unified ownership. Larger land holdings have the power to create developments that are inherently more consistent with the plan, because they can create the open space and buffering and mixes of uses that are necessary.

Carl also commented on the legacy of 5 acre zoning. These areas are not going to go away, for the most part. Because of this, there is going to have to be further articulation of the current recommendations graphic, so that there isn't an implication that rural residential areas are going to be redeveloped.

Tim Seibert commented that even though infrastructure lines exist in the ground, their existence may or may not be a precursor to additional development in the area, because the ownership and capacity of the line is very important. If the capacity is all spoken for, then the line might as well not exist. Sewer service is the most restrictive utility in the area right now. Other services are easier to solve. Because sewer service is going to be the driver, we need to think about how these services serve larger areas.

Darsey commented that maybe a nodes and corridors concept might make sense. This would recognize the fact that the nodes of dense development are likely to be connected by corridors. If density can be limited to these corridors, then some lower density areas could be preserved.

Bob Martin made the point that transportation is another key factor that wasn't accounted for in the alternative examples.

Tammy Jansma made a comment that our map should account for some of the likely development areas, that there might be an overlay that would be useful.

Steve Mulliken noted that the natural pattern is more of a node-based pattern, and expressed some concern over the symbols used graphically to display the buffer areas.

Carl explained the importance of buffering between incompatible uses, and explained that we are trying to figure out how to display that appropriately.

Darsey clarified that there were comments at the public meetings that were asking for denser, historic town center type commercial development, especially in the Peyton Town Center.

Steve Mulliken expressed a belief that water resources are not the limiting factor in the area. If an individual development wants water badly enough, it can buy water rights. He was interested in getting more details about the impacts of the alluvial aquifers on the pattern of urban nodes shown on the “synthesis” graphic. Aaron explained that he made the assumption that lower densities should be planned for those alluvial aquifers because of the contamination threat posed by urban density developments in the form of household hazardous wastes, lawn fertilizers, and road runoff. He also elaborated that rural residential development has a contamination risk associated with individual septic systems, which he assumed was a lower contamination risk.

Tasha Norman commented in favor of the node type of development, saying that a style of development that enforces strict contiguity must also assume that eventually, the entire area will be urban density, which may not be desirable. A node type of development builds in natural buffers in between dense town centers, and represents a more natural, historic pattern of development.

There was a question about whether the node system would suggest that the “town centers” include a robust mix of uses, and Tasha Norman said that the node system doesn’t do that in itself. Carl and Aaron commented that the policies would support this type of mixed land uses in the town centers.

Aaron argued that the node concept may actually result in quicker urban build-out, due to the extension of urban services across previously unserved areas. Tim Seibert countered that large landowners who can pay to extend infrastructure won’t up-size their capacity to serve surrounding areas, and because capacity is the limiting factor, development won’t proceed any faster.

Judy Ahlefeldt commented that she disagreed with Mr. Mulliken’s statement that there was enough water for the whole area, and she expressed a desire to see preserved rural areas separating the nodes. Carl commented that one of the ways that the nodal concept would work is that because there is not enough water to go around, water rights get consolidated into urban centers, with the surrounding areas being essentially sterilized.

Carl commented that once urban services are extended, and a pattern has been established, and the transportation system has been upgraded, it is very hard to tell a landowner that they won’t be able to subdivide their land.

There was some discussion about whether the plan should essentially overlay a hatch on some areas to show that if a development comes though that can provide housing diversity, proper buffers, and good interactions with surrounding areas, that they should be shown as consistent with the plan. Aaron asked whether such a plan would do anything more than the existing development review process. The consensus was that this is an important issue,

Steve Mulliken commented that this process was designed to allow communities to come together and have a collective voice in the development process. One of the realities is that it takes a large landowner to put together a good plan that provides community amenities. These developers just want to make sure that they have the ability to do that.

Judy Ahlefeldt asked if the planning team had considered the size of parcels in the planning area, and whether we’d accounted for changes in land use outside our planning

area. Aaron answered yes to both questions. Judy also questioned whether or not there are enough resources to support the urban development. Bob Martin commented that crafting a plan that allows for the possibility of the nodes developing would ensure that the plan is not made obsolete quickly.

There was some final discussion about possible proposals for changing the map graphic. Some of the discussion points were as follows:

Use symbols for the development nodes

Put the nodes on an overlay over the recommendations layer

Make sure that any development with a current entitlement is reflected on the map

Lynne commented that the public has told us that growth is okay, but it just needs to be appropriately located.

Carl commented that he thought the committee had given the planning team enough feedback to create a good map. Aaron and Carl planned to sit down and think through some possibilities for the display, and how it relates to the policy text.

4) Miscellaneous / Administrative Items / Additions / Questions
a. Meeting Schedule

The committee decided on a meeting schedule of 4/16, 4/30, and 5/14.