



Land Use

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BOULDER COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM #6

July 21, 2010 – 1:30 PM
Hearing Room, Third Floor
Boulder County Courthouse

STUDY SESSION with PUBLIC TESTIMONY

STAFF PLANNERS: Garry Sanfaçon and Hannah Hippely

Docket BCCP-10-0001: BOULDER COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVISION (Allenspark)

Proposed Plan for the area within the Allenspark Fire Protection District including the townsites of Allenspark, Raymond, and Riverside, for inclusion into the Boulder County Comprehensive Plan.

Discussion Item – No Action Requested.

SUMMARY

The purpose of this study session is to provide the Planning Commission with an update of the 747 Community Project Townsite Planning project and to allow members of the public to provide input. No action is requested at this time.

Land Use staff will provide a brief summary and introduction of the project and then hand it over to a representative from the 747 Community Project to provide their presentation (Attachment A).

Additional information about the project, including meeting notes, support documents, and maps may be accessed at the Land Use website:

http://www.bouldercounty.org/lu/townsite_planning/AllensparkRaymondRiverside.htm

BACKGROUND

In community meetings during the summer of 2008, approximately 150 community members gathered to discuss their values of mountain living and the pros and cons of engaging in the Townsite Planning Initiative being offered by the County (Attachment B). Ultimately, the group decided to move ahead with a planning initiative that would be aimed at having a voice in determining the future of the greater Allenspark area. Two additional community meetings were held to discuss the citizens' goals for their community, and to identify issues.

In the fall of 2008, Allenspark, Raymond and Riverside community members began to meet bi-monthly to determine how to guide the planning process. At the October 9 meeting the group agreed on a name: 747 Community Project (inspired by the area's telephone exchange) and created a mission: "We will develop a community plan that represents a consensus of our

vision for the future of the Allenspark area and provides guidelines for preserving what we value and changing what we do not.” They also developed a website: www.747communityproject.org.

An early decision of the group was to define the geographic scope of the project to include the entire Allenspark Fire District with specific modifications and additions for each townsite. In addition, they decided the scope of the planning process should look at all of the issues facing the area as opposed to only focusing on land use issues.

Over the next several months, they formed several committees including project management, data gathering, education, history, survey/communication, and research/alternatives. The data committee has requested numerous maps and data in order to establish an accurate picture of the existing conditions. The education committee has had county staff provide presentations on the following topics: Planning 101, Comprehensive Plan, Site Plan Review, BuildSmart, SepticSmart and Transferable Development Credits Program.

In addition, they developed a 13-page survey and mailed it to 1,250 residents. Over 450 responses were received. The 2009 survey results can be found at: www.747communityproject.org/survey. In the spring of 2009, the first community meeting was held to review survey results and seek input on the strategy for the planning process during the summer months, when the majority of our citizens and landowners are present in the area. During the summer of 2009, area citizens broke out into geographic area groups to define the specifics of what they wanted the community to be like in the future, and their thoughts on how to solve issues that have been identified. As a result of the summer meetings, a draft vision, goals and strategies was developed (Attachment C).

During the fall of 2009 and winter of 2010, eight working groups were formed: house size, residential policies, building materials and fire mitigation, business, technology, septic/sanitation, forest health, and advisory group (Attachment D). In addition, they crafted a 23-page survey, which was mailed in June. To view the 2010 survey, please visit the project website at: www.747communityproject.org/survey.

The next step is for Land Use staff to work closely with the work groups to begin to draft possible policies and regulations to be proposed for inclusion into the Boulder County Comprehensive Plan and Boulder County Land Use Code.

TOWNSITE PLANNING INITIATIVE

In order to help preserve the unique character of Boulder County’s historic communities, in the Spring of 2008, the County Commissioners invited several townsites (Allenspark, Eldora, Eldorado Springs, Gold Hill, Raymond, and Riverside) to participate in a community planning process where property owners and residents work together to develop a plan and proposed regulations for guiding future preservation and development in their respective communities.

It should be noted that the County has taken a non-traditional approach to community planning with the townsites. Rather than staff designing and leading the planning process, or hiring an outside consultant to do so, the County has intentionally not adopted a particular planning process model or roadmap in advance in order to allow each community to define

and design a planning process that best fits their needs and situation. The basic tenets of our approach with each community includes the following: being inclusive, being transparent, meeting the community where it is at, working bottom-up rather than top-down, and having the community define the geographic planning area, planning process and scope. A key desired outcome of the process is for the community to “own” the planning effort.

Staff’s role in these efforts has been to act as a resource to the community. Staff has helped provide technical assistance and coordinate with other county departments as well as conduct research about similar communities. Specific examples of how staff has been a resource to the community include: meeting logistical support and record keeping, data and mapping information, process design and facilitation when requested, communication and information clearinghouse through the Land Use website and mailings, “guest” speaker presentations, and liaison to the Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners.

REFERRALS

Land Use Department did not distribute this document to our typical referral agencies for review, consideration, and comment given that a proposal has not been developed for submittal at this time.

NEXT STEPS

The 747 Community Project will continue to meet to develop proposed amendments to the Boulder County Comprehensive Plan and Boulder County Land Use Code with the goal of presenting them to decision makers this fall. No action is requested of the Planning Commission at this time; however, an open discussion and feedback on the project update are welcome and encouraged.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment A 747 Community Project Presentation
- Attachment B Land Use Department Letter Introducing Townsite Planning Initiative, June 2008
- Attachment C 747 Community Project Draft Vision, Goals, Strategies, November 13, 2009
- Attachment D 747 Community Project Working Groups, January 26, 2010

747 Community Plan Update



747 Community Project Overview

- Created to enable the 747 Community to shape County policies to better fit the 747 mountain area.
 - Began after a community opposition to the 2008 revisions to the Land Use Code: house size, cabin rentals, septic compliance timeline
 - Community Volunteer Effort, Core Committee, Geo-Area teams and topic work groups.
 - Total of 40 747 Community bi monthly meetings, 6 Community wide summer meetings, untold hours of volunteer time in Geo-Area Groups and Work Groups.
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Timeline

- Aug 2008 – organize into a volunteer effort
 - Feb 2009 – Survey #1 to confirm community sentiment
 - Summer 2009 – Geo Area Work Groups to establish Vision and Guiding Principles
 - Fall 2009 – Establish Topic Work Groups house size, scenic corridor, business, building materials, septic & sanitation, forest health, advisory group
 - Spring 2010 Survey #2 – community vote on policy direction
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Timeline cont.

- Summer / Fall 2010 – craft policy changes with staff
 - Fall 2010 – obtain final community approval
 - Spring 2010 – adoption of the 747 Community Project into the Comp Plan and Land Use Code
Vision, Guiding Principles, Policy Criteria, Policy Changes
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Vision & Goals Established

- Good Stewards of the Environment
 - Preserve a Unique Way of Life
 - Preserve personal Property Rights
 - Maintain Transportation Corridors
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Working Groups

- ▣ House Size
 - ▣ Residential Policies
 - ▣ Building Materials & Fire Mitigation
 - ▣ Business
 - ▣ Technology
 - ▣ Septic / Sanitation
 - ▣ Forest Health
 - ▣ Advisory Group
-

House Size Goals

- Develop Alternatives to Existing House Size Regulations consistent with character within 747
 - Develop Proposals to Establish Quantitative Measures for Visible Criteria for Structures
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Residential Policy Goals

- Establish policies that simplify integration and triggers for SPR, Build smart, transportation, etc.

Bldg. Mat'ls & Fire Mitigation Goals

- Establish criteria that allows for materials consistent with the character in the area balancing fire mitigation strategies.

Business Goals

- Increase business opportunities within Allenspark and along the Peak to Peak Highway
 - Business Zoning Reinstatement to Pre 1984
 - Possibilities for new business zoning
 - Create **747 Mountain District Business Zoning** – Lodging, Restaurants, Event Centers
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Technology Goals

- Determine Requirements to add High Speed Internet
 - Determine Requirements to add Cell Service
 - Evaluate existing policies for Alternative Energy
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Septic & Sanitation Goals

- Establish policy modifications that take into consideration the significant constraints within each 747 area
 - Research best practices and emerging technologies
 - Research existing water quality to set a base line understanding within the community
 - Research testing data of failed systems to set base line understanding within the community
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Forest Health Goal

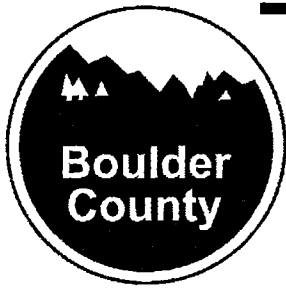
- Establish ways to support the existing and ongoing community beetle control and wildfire protection plan efforts

Advisory Group Goal

- Develop options that enable an on going local voice in shaping county policies that impact the 747 district and motivate individual and community action.
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Next Steps

- Survey #2 Results July 31, 2010
 - Community Meetings July & August 2010
 - Establish Policy Goals/Direction August 2010
 - Craft Policies with staff Fall 2010
 - Community Comment Fall 2010
 - Final Plan Fall 2010
 - County Hearings Fall 2010
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Land Use Department

Courthouse Annex

2045 13th Street ♦ 13th & Spruce Streets ♦ Boulder, Colorado 80302 ♦ (303) 441-3930
www.bouldercounty.org/lu/

June 2008

Dear Property Owner within the boundaries of the Townsite Planning Initiative,

In order to help preserve the unique character of each of Boulder County's historic communities, the County Commissioners are inviting several townsites¹ to participate in a community planning process where property owners and residents work together to develop a plan and proposed regulations for guiding future preservation and development in their respective communities.

Background and impetus for the Townsite Planning Initiative: In May 2005, the Board of County Commissioners (Board) began an update of the Boulder County Land Use Code. This update included extensive meetings with the public to identify issues and concerns that residents of Boulder County were having with the Code. Recurring comments included the lack of any building standards or other regulations to ensure sustainable development, in unincorporated Boulder County, the lack of certainty in the Site Plan Review regulations with respect to compatibility with existing neighborhood character, and the negative effects of new and remodeled larger scale homes on established neighborhoods. In reviewing public comments, it became clear that sustainability, in both new development and of the existing rural character in Boulder County, was a common theme.

The Boulder County Planning Commission in May 2007 adopted the Sustainability Element to the County's Comprehensive Plan. The Sustainability Element included goals and policies related to the preservation of the unique rural character in the county, especially those areas which have specific historic or contextual character. Goal 4 states that "The preservation of these diverse rural landscapes, neighborhoods and communities should be fostered and promoted through encouraging participation by the residents and property owners in those areas to identify the characteristics that are of importance to them and assist in development of land use strategies and tools for maintaining those characteristics."

One of the strategies that the County initially proposed to protect the unique character of these areas was to designate them as Special Character Areas, and adopt interim regulations for development, including maximum house sizes, in these areas. In March 2008, following many months of extensive public input, the Board decided not to designate Special Character Areas, but did feel that each community would benefit from engaging in a community planning effort and committed county resources to help these communities move forward with community plans. Subsequently, the Townsite Planning Initiative was created and a two-year full-time staff position funded.

In April 2008, the Land Use Department hired an experienced facilitator, Garry Sanfaçon, who has lived in the mountains for over 17 years, to staff this Initiative. As a longtime rural county

¹ Potential townsites may include Allenspark, Eldora, Gold Hill, Hygiene, Raymond, Riverside and the Peak to Peak Scenic Corridor.

resident and a 3-year member of the Boulder County Planning Commission, Garry brings together a wealth of firsthand knowledge and understanding about these unique areas as well as extensive experience in working with communities to help them develop their own master plans and long-range planning goals.

The County Commissioners have expressed interest in seeing the following “guidelines” - or parameters - established as part of the intent and scope of the *community planning process*:

- Work within the guidance provided by the Comprehensive Plan;
- Identify what sorts of things/changes property owners want to have happen that may not be currently allowed under the Boulder County Land Use Code;
- Strive to maintain stability of townsite character and seek ways to reduce incidences of dramatic changes in current building practices and uses.

Potential Benefits

- Community members take a leading role in formulating the desired future of their area;
- Proactive planning is done rather than reacting to the agendas and actions of others;
- Common ground is identified and future improvements planning is accomplished.

Potential Outcomes

- Creation of a shared community vision, plan and regulations that are reviewed and adopted by the County as part of the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Code;
- Rectify plat issues, right of ways and setbacks so individual property owners don't have to apply to Land Use individually which saves time and money;
- Identify land uses that would be appropriate, but are currently not allowed in the Code even through special review;
- Develop tailored zoning requirements and guidelines to help preserve and maintain the community's traditional feel;
- Address building height, size and scale and make legal nonconforming structures conforming.

Process: The initial approach is to meet informally with residents of each townsite to listen and learn about the main issues facing their specific community. If through this informal listening phase there is interest in exploring and participating in a *community planning process* the County will convene a community-wide meeting to engage the entire community to determine its level of interest. We have begun this process with Eldora, Allenspark, Raymond and Riverside.

Upcoming Community Meetings

Allenspark, Raymond and Riverside: Monday, June 30, 6:30 p.m., Highlands Presbyterian Camp
Eldora: Wednesday, July 2, 6:30 p.m., Nederland Community Center
Gold Hill, Hygiene, Peak to Peak Scenic Corridor: Fall 2008

To learn more about the Initiative as well as share your views and concerns please contact Garry at 720-564-2642 or gsanfacon@bouldercounty.org. To stay abreast of the latest information visit the Land Use website at www.bouldercounty.org/lu/townsite_planning/.

Sincerely,

Dale Case
Director, Land Use Department

Garry Sanfaçon
Planner II

ATTACHMENT C

November 13, 2009

VISION, GOALS & STRATEGIES STATEMENT ALLENSPARK FIRE DISTRICT 747 COMMUNITY PROJECT

The community, anchored by the Allenspark townsite, is located between 6500 and 8500 feet elevation in the Front Range of the Colorado Rocky Mountains, yet is easily accessible by the population of the growing Front Range. Our community has evolved over more than one hundred years through the hard work, ideals, and dreams of those who have lived and played here. There is a strong tradition of multi-generational family ownership and long-term ownership and visitation. The result of that evolution is a unique mix of people all sharing an equally unique environment. In that sharing lies a desire for the area to remain much as it has been and is today while recognizing some development is probable and desirable. To that end, the community has come together to state what we feel would be certain key aspirations for the community that we hope will help guide current and future dwellers as they grapple with change that is sure to come with the future. *ADD CHARACTER of the people*

This document is a compilation of extensive discussion and meetings within the community. The input came from three separate geographic sub-regions within the Allenspark fire district, Raymond/Riverside, the Peak to Peak Scenic Corridor and the Allenspark townsite proper. The three areas share a common, distinct culture in terms of the history, people, topography, and architecture, but each area also has unique characteristics and needs.

Our community will maintain its long history of stewardship of the natural environment and remote character. We are all drawn to this landscape and recognize it as an important component of our vision. We are a community where residents respect the privacy, rights and goals of our neighbors. We honor our neighbor's individual rights on decisions pertaining to development, bound by few and locally determined considerations. We envision a mechanism of self-determination whereby community members come together to address issues. We work in partnership with other entities as appropriate for health, safety and environmental issues.

Goals common across all geographic areas

Nature

- Stewardship of the environment to sustain natural resources, view shed and wildlife.

Social

- Preserve long held traditions of community life.
- Encourage a diverse community.
- Support a vibrant community where we all age well.

Technology

- Obtain access to communications and renewable energy.

Built Environment

- Ensure property rights are given a high level of priority.
- Develop construction and infrastructure restrictions based on local input

Business

- Support local business and allow them flexibility in providing current and future services.
- Create strategies to shape development.

Political

- Establish a mechanism to provide appropriate representation of local interests.

Transportation

- Limit impact of the highway.
- Provide public transit options.
- Preserve and restore access to private property.
- Establish right of way (ROW) scaled to the area.

Goals unique to the Raymond Riverside Geographic area

Nature

- Develop policies and programs that maintain the health and natural state of the river in collaboration with the community

Business

- Protect and strengthen the residential and private character of the Raymond/Riverside area, favoring community focused development over tourism focused

Goals unique to the Peak to Peak Scenic Corridor area

Business

- Encourage new business along the scenic corridor
- Encourage and support vacation rentals along the corridor

Nature:

- Discourage expansion of access to forest service or National Park lands

Goals unique to the Allenspark Townsite

Nature:

- Maintain the health of the local environment

Business:

- Encourage and support tourism

Strategies and Actionable Items

Now fill out the specific goals and strategies to accomplish the higher-level goals we have set down

Raymond Riverside

- Maintain the health of the Middle St Vrain river
- Support land use regulations favorable to multi-generational land management
- Develop and support reasonable regulations
- Keep the cost of entry to the area reasonable to encourage a diverse population
- Develop local advisory board(s)
- Support for appropriate septic systems
- Limit house sizes consistent with lot size and character of the Raymond/Riverside townsites.
- Encourage proper maintenance of properties
- Support community focused businesses
- Encourage the pedestrian friendly character of Riverside Drive
- Support renewable energy technologies and conservation
- Allow building materials consistent with national practice for forested mountain area

Allenspark Townsite:

- Develop a townsite sewage treatment facility
- See setback restrictions waived when alleyways and streets when vacated
- Partner with the county to have dead trees removed along platted streets, roads and alleyways
- Obtain cell phone access for the area
- Develop a local, open air gathering place for the town

Peak to Peak Scenic Corridor:

- Modify/develop view shed regulations to meet desires of the local land owners and remain consistent with the stewardship vision for this community

- Largely remove restrictions on construction
- Roadway improvements along Rt 7
 - a. sound reduction
 - b. safety and speed
 - c. emergency telephone placed at Bunce School Road and Highway 7 and somewhere at the northern portion of the fire district.
 - d. some control of bicyclists' traffic for their safety as well as that of the motorists

ATTACHMENT D



747 Community Project

January 26, 2010

To residents of the Allenspark fire district:

We thank everyone who provided input to the project last year and now we start 2010 by updating you on what the 747 Community Project is up to and to renew our invitation to you to participate. Last year, we asked what issues were important to you and we boiled your feedback down into a short list of issue areas. Now we come back to ask for high level proposals to address the issues on that list.

The 747 Community Project core team on January 14th formed work groups to talk about what everyone really wanted to talk about all along... what people in Allenspark want and/or need. The working groups described below will post their schedules and work on the 747 Community Project website. We understand what concerns you, now we want to know what you feel should be done about those concerns.

Let us know if you would like to work with any of the work groups listed below, or have a proposal that you would like to have submitted to a particular work group.

1. **Scenic working group** – This group is already established and working. They are using a nationally-recognized methodology to look at the view components in our area and how those components affect us visually. The result of this work can be applied to multiple questions you have asked us to look into, such as how building materials affect people visually, or how visual impact should be considered as part of evaluating a SPR submission.
2. **House size** – Look at alternative policy models, options and considerations relating to house size constraints. One such example could be a proposal for allowable house size being pegged to property size.
3. **Building materials** – Look at options for modifying county policies relating to what we can build our houses out of. One example could be to look at ways to address both fire safety and character of the community possibly suggesting appropriate fire mitigation actions that would allow an owner to use wood siding on an addition or new build.
4. **Businesses, camps, institutions** – Look at the policies that affect current and future business activity in the district and look for changes that can enable existing businesses, camps, etc. to succeed
5. **Homes** – Take a detailed look into current processes that affect new builds and remodels such as SPR, building permits, sustainability requirements, etc. Look into changes to these processes that would recognize unique requirements of our area.
6. **Septic/Sanitation** – Boulder County is driving to have all improved properties in unincorporated Boulder County have approved sanitation systems within the next 13 years. This group will focus on the realities and options available to our community as well as developing approaches to helping people with limited financial resources address this process.
7. **Transportation** – This group will look at a broad range of issues related to roads and transportation including driveway requirements, easements issues, county maintenance, etc. At the last commissioners meeting with the 747 Project, we were informed that the financial downturn is likely to impact future levels of road maintenance the county will be able to afford. Given the critical role road maintenance plays for our year 'rounders, we want input into that decision process.

8. **Modern technology** – Look at a myriad of issues surrounding communication and energy technologies, determine appropriate policies for our area, and clear the path for us to actually bring the desired technologies to our community.

9. **Forest health** – This group will focus on maintaining healthy forests that are so important to everyone in our community. Recognizing the long running efforts of existing local groups working on issues such as beetle control and wildfire protection, the 747 group will try to address what actions may be required to assist existing groups or to address areas of concern that may not be being addressed today.

10. **Local advisory body** – This group will look at local support and governance models that could support our community on an ongoing, long-term basis.

Contact us by mail, email, or phone call (see below for our contact information), and we will pass your note along to the appropriate working group(s). Some of the groups may decide to hold weekend working meetings to accommodate more participation.

We are trying to quickly wrap up the list of high level proposals by the end of February so we can produce and send out the next survey in April, in which we will ask the greater Allenspark community which of the proposals they support and wish to see worked on in detail. Proposals with clear community support will become the focus of the remainder of the 747 Community Project as we work to engage you, the county and possibly other organizations to effect the change you tell us you seek. We are planning to hold at least one summer meeting on the proposals. The finalized proposals will be presented to Boulder County and possibly other groups in the fall.

Sincerely,
The 747 Community Project Team

Upcoming Meetings:

747 Community Project core team meetings 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month, 6:30 p.m. at the Allenspark Firehouse.

Proposal work group meetings will be announced on our website (see below), contact us to contribute.

747 Community Project update with Boulder County Commissioners, February 16, 2:00 p.m., Commissioners hearing room, Boulder County Courthouse.

Boulder County Comprehensive Plan Revision – Gold Hill Townsite Plan, February 2, 2:00 p.m., Commissioners hearing room, Boulder County Courthouse.

Contact us:

MAIL: 747 Community Project, PO Box 74, Allenspark, CO 80510

PHONE: (303) 834-7478 Leave a message

EMAIL: 747CommunityProject@GMAIL.com

WEBSITE: 747communityproject.org For current and archive information