



Land Use

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BOULDER COUNTY LAND USE

Allenspark Townsite Planning Initiative July 23, 2019 Community Meeting Summary

PURPOSE

On July 23, 2019, Boulder County staff met with members of the Allenspark Townsite community to further discuss topics identified as priorities through previous engagement with the community. The goal was to confirm community priorities identified to date and collaboratively define a process for moving forward to address community planning priorities.

PRESENT

Boulder County Land Use

Christy Wiseman, Long Range Planner I

Dale Case, Land Use Director

Jose Ruano, Long Range Planner I

Nicole Wobus, Long Range Planning and Policy Manager

Boulder County Public Health

Erin Dodge, Water Quality Program Coordinator

Members of the Allenspark Community

Fourteen members of the public signed in for the event.

AGENDA

- Introduction and Context (15 min)
- Well and Septic Overview (15 min)
- Concepts Discussion (60 min)
 - Parcel by parcel help (15 min)
 - Rural Community District (10 min)
 - Structure allowance above house size maximum (10 min)
 - Short term rentals (15 min)
 - Other (10 min)
- Next Steps (20 min)

MEETING SUMMARY

Nicole Wobus provided an overview of the meeting agenda, background information, and a summary of previous Allenspark Planning Initiative efforts.¹ The meeting agenda was developed based on previous feedback from participants in the Allenspark Townsite Planning Initiative working group. Staff is engaging in a variety of methods to engage the community (e.g., meetings, surveys, “office hours”, etc.) recognizing that the Allenspark community is made up of both permanent and temporary residents, and that it may be difficult for some to attend meetings. Jose Ruano provided an overview of results from a March 2019 survey aimed at gauging community interest in furthering the planning initiative, as well as priority topic areas. [View or download the survey summary](#). Erin Dodge gave a presentation on well and septic regulations and Public Health’s Septic Smart program. Dale Case presented on relevant Land Use Code provisions that are available as tools to address some community concerns. The overview included Adaptive Reuse of a Historic Landmark, incentives and site-specific flexibility in applying certain Code provisions for properties with historic landmark designation, potential recognition of properties with an existing non-conforming use as a Use of Community Significance, Transfer of Development Credits, and other provisions. Jose Ruano provided an overview of the Rural Community District (RCD) concept and possibilities for establishing an RCD in the Allenspark Townsite. Christy Wiseman concluded the staff presentation with a status update on the short-term rentals Land Use Code update and provided questions for discussion.

The meeting included a round table discussion with staff on each of the agenda topics, as well as an opportunity for meeting participants to state their reason for attending the meeting and their priority topics to receive attention going forward. The following sections summarize discussion outcomes.

GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Rural Community District (RCD)

An RCD is a type of zoning district that townsites can create to implement a vision for future development within their townsite limits. RCDs are intended to encourage flexibility in the land use patterns of established rural communities. RCDs may appropriately limit (but may not alter or expand) the uses allowed in the zoning district(s) which govern(s) the subject parcels immediately prior to the creation of the RCD. An RCD would allow the community to see the list of allowed uses and determine whether specific uses are appropriate for the Allenspark Townsite. There was interest in exploring the creation of an RCD for the Allenspark Townsite, however, more information on the concept and examples of what the community can accomplish under the RCD was requested. Participants prioritized bringing existing businesses into conformity (beyond utilizing the Use of Community Significance provision) and ensuring mountain values are recognized. The townsite residents’ values may be captured in the framework of the RCD if it were to be created. A community working group meeting was identified as the preferred form of communication between the county and community residents in further exploring the RCD concept.

Short-term Rentals

¹ An overview of the Allenspark Townsite Planning Initiative and summaries of previous meetings can be found at: <https://www.bouldercounty.org/property-and-land/land-use/planning/townsite-planning/allenspark/>

The Boulder County Land Use Code defines *Short-term Dwelling Rentals* (STRs) as dwellings that are rented in durations of less than 30 days. This includes dwellings rented out by individual owners and dwellings rented out on behalf of an owner by a property management group. Dwellings rented out on a month-to-month basis are not considered Short-term Dwelling Rentals. Participants listed STRs as a community priority. Several residents described the Allenspark Townsite as historically being a second home community, where housing availability was already a concern prior to the popularity of STRs. Participants suggested that future STR regulations should be contextual and not one-size-fits-all for the county as a whole. There was a common belief among meeting participants that STRs allow for a diversification of income and provide the financial support to pay for second homes, some of which have been in families for generations. Some participants expressed that their Allenspark homes hold special meaning and could not be maintained without the income from short term rentals. Many agreed that though the safety of STRs is a concern, safety-related Land Use Code provisions should not hinder the financial viability of STRs. Participants discussed regulatory options such as licensing requirements and owner occupancy requirements. Opinions varied, however, many participants indicated that STRs should not be regulated by frequency limits (i.e., number of days rented). Participants also noted that rental uses are part of the historic character of the Allenspark community. Participants were interested in continuing the discussion on STRs at a community meeting with the county and Allenspark residents.

Site-specific Help

Several participants requested keeping an open dialog with Land Use Staff regarding property-specific help to provide awareness of what is allowed under the current Code, and to work through some challenges facing certain properties in the community. Participants would like to maintain this property-specific dialogue regardless of whether the community ultimately pursues forming an RCD. Participants prioritized allowing existing uses to continue.

PARTICIPANT PRIORITIES

The table below reflects participants’ reasons for attending the meeting and topics identified as priorities for the Allenspark Townsite Planning Initiative going forward.

Reason for Attending the Meeting?	Number of Participants
Keep an open dialog	1
Allow existing uses to continue	2
Learn and represent community concerns	1
Represent community values (RCD)	2
Discuss STR safety and regulations tailored to specific areas	3
Learn what people can do on their property	5
Priorities Going Forward?	Number of Participants
Rural Community District (RCD)	7

Short-term Dwelling Rentals	7
Zoning and property uses (bringing businesses back into conformity with the Land Use Code)	5
Specific Property Help	1
Keeping the dialog open for better awareness of what is allowed	1
Honoring mountain life and community values, and working to address residents' concerns	1

NEXT STEPS

Staff will schedule two community meetings:

- Late September – A meeting will be scheduled to further discuss STRs
- Late October – A meeting will be scheduled to further discuss the RCD concept

Staff will update the community on exact meeting details as soon as they are finalized.

Staff will continue to be available to provide property specific support. Property specific inquiries can be directed to any of the Land Use staff present at the meeting.

Staff will be circulating a short-term dwelling rentals survey to the public in the following weeks. Please contact Christy Wiseman at cwiseman@bouldercounty.org or 720-564-2623 for more information.