



Community Planning & Permitting

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BOULDER COUNTY COMMUNITY PLANNING & PERMITTING

Allenspark Townsite Planning Initiative November 18, 2019 Community Meeting Summary

PURPOSE

On November 18, 2019, Boulder County staff met with members of the Allenspark community to further discuss planning challenges facing the Allenspark Townsite and to explore the possibility of creating a Rural Community District (RCD) under the Boulder County Land Use Code. The objective was to confirm the goals set by the community members in previous meetings, to refine the community's planning goals, gauge interest in pursuing the creation of an RCD, and to collaboratively define a process for moving forward to address community planning priorities.

PRESENT

Boulder County Land Use

Dale Case, Land Use Director

Nicole Wobus, Long Range Planning and Policy Manager

Denise Grimm, Principal Planner

Christy Wiseman, Long Range Planner I

Molly Marcucilli, Long Range Planner I

Boulder County Transportation

Angel Bond, Mobility for All

Members of the Allenspark Community

Twenty members of the public signed in for the event.

AGENDA

- Introduction and review agenda (5 min)
- Presentation by Angel Bond – Enhanced mobility services (15 min)
- Exploration of Rural Community District (RCD) Concept (70 min)
 - Review planning challenges facing townsite and priorities/goals set at previous meetings
 - Review RCD regulations, Niwot example
 - Refine Allenspark planning goals in light of RCD option
- Gauge interest in further pursuing RCD, confirm next steps (15 min)
- Staff available for one on one Q&A (15 min)

MEETING SUMMARY

The meeting began with a discussion about enhanced mobility services in Boulder County by Angel Bond from Boulder County Transportation. She informed the group of the mountain volunteer driving program, which will be locally owned and run by a non-profit. Requests for proposals from non-profits are set to be posted by February 2020. For more information, Angel can be contacted at 720-564-2218 or abond@bouldercounty.org.

The remainder of the meeting focused on the topic of potentially creating a Rural Community District (RCD) for the Allenspark Townsite. Nicole Wobus provided an overview of the meeting agenda and reviewed the Allenspark Townsite's planning related challenges such as the Townsite's small lot sizes and resulting issues with setbacks, inadequate parking and sanitation accommodations, wildfire hazards, and historic significance of several buildings and uses. Because some businesses are currently located in the Forestry district, those properties would be required to come into compliance if the owner wanted to make changes to their structures under the existing Land Use Code provisions. Nicole then provided an overview of results from a March 2019 online survey and a July 2019 meeting aimed at gauging the Townsite's topic areas of high importance and top priorities to address. Previous meetings and the survey identified potential creation of an RCD to tailor regulations to the needs of the Townsite as a high priority. [View or download the survey summary.](#)

Denise Grimm provided an overview of the RCD concept and described the RCD in Niwot as an example. Only a few townsites and rural community settlements in the county are eligible to create an RCD, and Niwot is currently the county's only RCD. Denise answered questions from the group and clarified how an RCD would be implemented and its implications for the Townsite. Some of the group's concerns included whether an RCD would simplify or complicate the planning process for the Townsite and how the voting process would unfold. Denise explained that the RCD regulations could be quite detailed and expansive in scope, or the scope of the regulations could be simple and narrowly defined; it would ultimately be the decision of the community. The group shared ideas for potential topics to include in the RCD regulations. They included: bringing existing uses into conformance, potential business zoning, setbacks, building materials, historic district, consider potential future uses (storage, home occupation), short term rentals. Denise noted that 50% of property owners within the Townsite will need to vote in favor of an RCD in order for it to pass, and that only property owners within the Townsite can vote.

The group expressed concerns about how the county has been engaging with the community and felt the county's dissemination of information was inadequate. Some suggestions by the group included mailing hard copies of meeting information to each household, improving coordination with the local paper, The Wind, and forming a Townsite alliance to promote consensus and effective decision-making.

The group asked additional questions concerning the limitations of nonconforming uses and structures in the Townsite, requested further clarification of whether Eldorado Springs went through an RCD process, and asked about the timeline of voting on an RCD. Staff clarified the difference between nonconforming structures and nonconforming uses and explained how they are treated in

terms of additions and remodels (i.e., nonconforming structures cannot change their building footprint without coming into conformance; non-conforming uses must go through a Use of Community Significance process or otherwise come into conformance if they come through a Land Use process). Dale explained to the group that Eldorado Springs didn't create an RCD, but that the county is looking to introduce new zoning classifications to address the needs of that community. Staff told the group that depending on how complex the RCD regulations are, it is possible that a vote on a potential Allenspark RCD could conceivably occur in 2020, but currently there is not a solid timeline, and much would depend on the scope of regulations the community seeks to introduce as part of their RCD process.

Nicole asked the group whether they were in favor of pursuing an RCD through a show of hands. The majority of the group showed support. She then asked if the group had any suggestions on what process would be best for the community, and the group pointed out that they were unsure of what their options would be and requested that staff provide a menu of options for them to review.

A timeline of meetings between the working group and the county was discussed. There was a consensus to meet in January after the holidays. The group expressed interest in creating an internal group which would include property owners within the Townsite and other interested community members and agreed that those meetings should occur at least once per month during the week. Some expressed a preference for Thursday night meetings from 5-7. The county offered to send a staff member to each meeting to provide more technical assistance and knowledge of Boulder County's planning processes.

Next steps discussed included staff creating an inventory of nonconforming properties and other planning challenges in the Townsite, so that more robust data could inform the planning process. The Townsite community selected a volunteer, Ron Holan, to act as a liaison with the county. Staff agreed to compile a mailing list of property owners within the Townsite, and to send the group the Allenspark-related element of the Boulder County Comprehensive Plan and relevant maps of the Townsite. The meeting concluded with informal discussion amongst the community members and county staff.

NEXT STEPS

- Staff will develop an inventory of nonconforming properties and related planning issues within the Allenspark Townsite.
- Members of the Allenspark Townsite will plan to meet monthly to discuss the RCD.
- Staff will compile a mailing list of property owners within the Allenspark Townsite
- Post on website and send working group all materials referenced at meeting
- Staff will put together a menu of options for RCD regulations for the Townsite to review
- Staff will analyze historic district potential
- County will organize future working group meetings on dates to be determined with the liaison for the Townsite working group