



Joint Planning Commission Meeting – Summary

Tuesday, September 11, 2007

Town Council Chambers

Time: 6:00 – 8:00 PM

Agenda

1. Reports from Initial Public Events and Meetings
2. 1994 Plan Diagnosis Analysis Report – presentation and discussion
3. 1994 Plan Vision - discussion
4. Wrap-up (future events, next meeting dates, etc.)

Summary of Discussion

Vision

- Quantum changes since 1994 Plan vision.
- Bring into the plan the principles of smart growth and energy use ideas.
- There is a disconnect between the vision and the public's idea of what is needed in the community.
- The plan did not anticipate the economic changes and the rising affluence in the community, and the impacts these changes bring. Economic pressures will get greater and will bring even more change.
- Bring global and national influences into consideration.
- Use the vision as a starting point, but we haven't achieved it all.
- We didn't plan for the shifting demographic conditions. How do we insert those impacts? Did the 1994 Plan create that with 35 acre parcels?
- Definition of "sustainability"?
- Orderly growth is not coordinated with infrastructure planning. Is infrastructure planning a good lever for controlling growth?
- A lot of the questions have to do with density and where to put it. The county says "no," so that is forcing it into downtown Jackson. Is that right? The plan should answer the question of where density should occur.

Plan Analysis

- What is "community character"? (Other than Santa Fe, where have communities established character?) (e.g., Ashland, OR, took car dealerships out.) Character is not just prescribing structures and design. How county looks now. Not as simple as building design.
- Preserving character can be an excuse for denying a project. Affordable housing can be mantle.
- Where do we want to see areas of change versus areas of stability?
- Struggling with amendments – mixed-use. Get away from using zoning to isolate usages. Allow flexibility. Social and economic changes are occurring and we should plan for future demographic. Economic changes will be more dramatic in next 15 years.
- Everyone wants density, but not next door.
- In the county the perception of density is different from town's perception. More density is usually okay in town, but in the county, moderate density gets rejected.



- Perception – county would like to shoehorn in town density but that achieves segregation.
- Does designation make it easier? (E.g., school housing parcel – proposal for density).
- The community doesn't appreciate the nuances of balancing objectives. Make them clear and help prioritize.
- In the town the rules are too vague. For town everything is subjective.
- One of the big questions is where can we put density in the county?
- People have to shop – The plan needs to address that, but we have limited the amount of commercial for years, demanding no commercial.
- Commercial follows residential. Strip development has happened in West Jackson. Pattern of development has made traffic worse.
- We need to understand the trade offs. Will always lose some environment resources. Designating affordable housing locations is volatile. Everyone wants it put not next door.
- How much affordable housing should the public provide versus the private sector? Is the need for employees a sufficient justification for the community providing more affordable housing? How do we get more apartments built?
- Are the goals really achievable? (i.e. affordable housing integrated throughout the community)
- There are value judgments in deciding who gets affordable housing: service / seasonal jobs versus essential service workers. These decisions materially affecting core of community. Why as county are we involved? Rubs accept traffic. Growth with no affordable housing.
- Define community character.
- Define urban growth. When should it stop?
- Define the buildout and stick to it?
- Why not apartments being built? (e.g., Blair Place) and an element that says "these are always rentals" to help with affordability crunch.
- We get hung up on owning units. Is that social engineering?
- Not much space in town to accommodate all the county's growth. Keep that in mind.
- "Character" vision – will be by virtue of the place. (i.e., it will be different for Jackson and Wilson and other parts of the county.)
- Planning Commission and elected officials have different perception of issues.
- Question – density – visualize – play out projects. One view. Don't want to change.
- Help the public understand a lot more issues and tradeoffs through this process. Always talk about tradeoffs. The community grabs hold of a single issue and will lock in to one reason something should be done or denied.
- Goals – need to be achievable (e.g., affordable housing integrated).
- Sustainability (according to one definition, this is a bogus term for Jackson, because we require outside resources). Use a terms that is appropriate and that deals with energy efficiency, smart growth concepts. However, don't want hypocrisy of using the term if we don't mean it. For instance, we may need to change our rules – (e.g., turbines too restrictive). If we want to be green, people should be able to do what is necessary.