

January 6, 2012

To: Board of County Commissioners, Mayor Barron and Jackson Town Council, County Planning Commission and Town Planning Commission

CC: Town and County Planning Staffs, Bruce Meighen

Re: Character District Maps and Community Goals

Dear County Commissioners, Mayor Barron and Town Council, Town and County Planning Commissioners and Planning Staffs:

Thank you for the intensive work all of you have been doing with the Comprehensive Plan in the last several months, and for your commitment to community goals.

I am writing to explain why the Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance believes it is important to verify that the new Character District Maps accurately illustrate overall community goals.

We agree with your general approach to the Comprehensive Plan:

1. Develop broad policy objectives
2. Generate relatively detailed maps based on those objectives
3. Crosscheck that the maps do in fact match up to the overall objectives

We are now at the point in the process where checking the maps against the overall community goals is vitally important, and we would like to provide suggestions on what additional information is needed to conduct a thorough crosscheck.

The Alliance agrees that an important first step is to generate a detailed description of the goals for the future of each Character District. You have already identified the location and type of development desired in each area of every district, and determining the desired *amount* of this development will complete the picture. This is an important step because:

- Determining the amount of development desired in each sub-district would enable the community to immediately verify whether the maps are in line with the concrete goals we have established in the policies, including the goal for a 60/40% split on rural/complete neighborhood development, the goal to house 65% of our workforce, and the goal of not exceeding a doubling of current development.
- This information forms the foundation for analysis of a range of other issues, including the projected impacts of this development on wildlife, the expected effects on traffic, the fiscal impacts of new development, and the economic viability of commercial endeavors in the area.
- Numerical objectives for future development in each district would provide greater predictability, and would make the Comp Plan more understandable to the general public.

We understand that the discussion about buildout numbers became very heated in recent years. We recognize that this is not intended to be a “numbers-based plan,” yet the public was told that numbers would “fall out of

the mapping process.” There is now an opportunity to provide numerical objectives as part of the description of each sub-district in the Character District Maps.

We encourage you to ask the planning staff to provide estimates of the amount of future development that is desired in each sub-district. This step would reduce the confusion that will be generated if people make their own independent estimates, and will clearly illustrate what the plan means for our future.

Over the next few days, you will see a newspaper ad by the Conservation Alliance asking whether the maps accurately illustrate the community’s overall goals. Answering this fundamental question is now within reach, and clearly providing answers on the expected amount and location of development is vital to getting the support of the community before the adoption of the Comp Plan.

The Conservation Alliance has advocated for responsible planning for 33 years. In order for the Alliance to explain to residents why development regulations are important to the community’s ability to preserve wildlife, scenery, and community character, we need to be able to show people how some trade-offs in their neighborhood contribute to achieving the major priorities of the community as a whole. We believe that residents will support the Comp Plan if they can see how increased development in some areas enables conservation of other areas, and achieves overall community goals.

Please give the planning staff the green light to provide this information to you, and to the community, to foster better understanding of the Comp Plan, and better decisions based on that data.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Trevor Stevenson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Trevor Stevenson
Executive Director



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January 9, 2012

Via e-mail only (jdaugherty@tetonwyo.org, tsinclair@ci.jackson.wy.us)
Jackson/Teton County Planning Team
c/o Jeff Daugherty and Tyler Sinclair

Re: Open Space Protection and the Jackson/Teton County Comprehensive Plan Update

Dear Planning Team:

In recent weeks, we have received numerous requests from community groups, citizens, and elected officials to comment on the Jackson/Teton County Comprehensive Plan Update, which is now being considered for adoption. We are neither experts on community planning, nor advocates. We do, though, have over 30 years of experience in partnering with landowners to conserve open space in Jackson Hole. Drawing on that experience, we offer the following perspective on the areas of the plan that pertain to open space protection.

Our last public comment on the plan, a May 14, 2009 letter, made three recommendations: 1) consider establishing a dedicated funding source for land conservation; 2) preserve development potential in rural areas *as a strategy for conserving those areas*; and 3) include provisions for clustering and/or transferring development rights. We stand by those recommendations and make the following additional observations.

The plan makes many key points that align perfectly with our experience of how open space and wildlife habitat are conserved in Jackson Hole: the relationship between agriculture and open space protection; the importance of our valley's private lands in providing habitat and movement corridors for wildlife; the attributes of permanence and active stewardship that are endemic to conservation easement-protected open space; the key role of ranchers and other private landowners as valuable stewards of these lands. These are all themes that we know from experience to be true and that we are encouraged to see reflected in the plan.

The plan appears to wrestle with a tension between protecting open space through incentives versus through restrictions. In our experience, the best way to conserve meaningful open space is through incentives. This is how we work—in a market-based environment, with willing landowners. Setting aside the question of fairness, because of the base density rights that private landowners possess, we think it is impossible for this community to zone its way to strategic, high-quality open space.

The plan expresses a goal of directing growth into areas of existing infrastructure and services, which the plan identifies as less than 5% of the private land in the county. Insofar as the purpose of that goal is to preserve high-quality open space and wildlife





Jackson/Teton County Planning Team

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habitat in the remaining 95%, we think it is important that the plan recognize the market preference for base-density development and preserve and create incentives for the conservation of those areas that are capable of counteracting that preference. To put it another way, if you want something other than one unit per 35 acres in the rural area, the only way to get it is through incentives. These incentives should be both strong and diverse, as what works for one landowner in a key habitat area may not for his or her neighbor.

Finally, we have increasingly found that smaller-scale conservation represents an important component of our land conservation strategy. Done thoughtfully, the conservation of smaller parcels both complements the protection of adjacent, larger parcels and over time can develop into a pattern of conservation that is greater than the sum of its parts. We have seen this play out in the conservation of numerous smaller parcels along the Snake River, for example, which today constitutes a meaningful network of conserved lands along this key natural feature in the valley. The Planned Residential Development (PRD) tool has been key to this work, as it is the only meaningful incentive for conservation on parcels smaller than 70 acres in size.

As the land trust, we can bring to bear capital from private, state, and federal sources, as well as facilitate the federal tax incentives that have helped bring about so much conservation in the past. But to be successful in conserving open lands in Jackson Hole in the future, it is critical that the policies we identify above be included as other legs of the stool, so to speak.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our perspective at this important juncture. We are grateful for the work of the town and county planning commissions, elected officials, and staff and all of the citizens and community groups who have contributed to the planning effort.

Sincerely,

A stylized, cursive signature in black ink.

Laurie Andrews
Executive Director

A stylized, cursive signature in black ink.

Pete Lawton
Board President

Alex Norton

From: Armond Acri [anacri_wy@msn.com]
Sent: Monday, January 09, 2012 7:30 PM
To: Alex Norton; County Commissioners; Town Council; County Planning & Building; Annette Despain
Subject: SHJH "Red Dot" List
Attachments: Red Dot List.docx

Teton County Commissioners, Mayor Barron, Jackson Town Council, Teton County Planning and Zoning Commission, Town of Jackson Planning Commission,

If Save Historic Jackson Hole were allowed to participate in the "Red Dot" exercise this week, the attached list is where we would place our dots. After each dot is a brief explanation of why we would place our dots there.

Armond Acri
Executive Director
Save Historic Jackson Hole

SHJH “Red Dot” List

- The Plan must include building and density numbers.
 - A Plan without metrics isn't a real plan.
- Any density increase must be balanced with density decrease.
 - Permanent Protection of sensitive areas was and is the objective, not town growth.
 - Protection of sensitive areas is what was sold to the public and the promise needs to be kept.
- No Zoning changes and density transfer until a mechanism is in place.
 - With 50-70 years of growth already in the pipeline, we have time to get this right.
- Protect rural character and small town atmosphere everywhere.
 - Jackson Hole is all about small town rural character; that's what we are.
 - The current draft only extends this protection to the Town Square.
- Eliminate contradictory and confusing definitions.
 - We can provide a list, but start with “stable” and “complete neighborhoods.”
- Do not encourage development in Northern South Park.
 - Infill in Town before we sprawl south.
 - We do not want to refight the Porter Annexation battle.
- Do not expand the Lodging Overlay.
 - The existing overlay already allows for more lodging, where's the need to make it larger?
We are rarely at full occupancy now.
- No Density increase in difficult/sensitive areas.

The following areas all have access problems and are adjacent to critical wildlife habitat. They should not see increases in density.

 - Between Broadway and Flat Creek in Midtown and Town Commercial Core.
 - Steep hillsides at the “Y”
 - Commercial development at the Aspens should not expand across 390.

Alex Norton

From: Kathy Tompkins [wozkins@hotmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, January 11, 2012 8:56 AM
To: County Commissioners; Town Council; County Planning & Building; Annette Despain; Armond Acri
Subject: Red Dot Comments

Just wanted to forward this red dot comment list from SHJH. I agree with these comments and strongly urge you to incorporate these logical and forward thinking comments in the character district maps. We need these clarifications that have been supported by the residents of Jackson Hole through out the 5 year comprehensive plan. The more clarification up front will prevent costly arguments and drawn out disagreements over future land development proposals.

Sincerely, Kathy Tompkins
Cottonwood Park Neighbors
307 690 4973

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Alex Norton

From: Rich Bloom [southpark@bresnan.net]
Sent: Thursday, January 12, 2012 9:18 AM
To: Alex Norton; 'Bruce Meighen'
Cc: Shawn Hill; Tyler Sinclair; Jeff Daugherty
Subject: Town Summaries for 5.6, 10.1 and 10.2

Alex and Bruce – I know Shawn took notes and you have the tapes, but following is my take on where the town landed on areas 5.6 and district 10 – let me know if I got it wrong.

Area 5.6

- **EW connector (South Park Loop to HWY 89)** – Tie to development of 5.6. Split on need, intersection with HWY 89 causing problems, whether it would encourage development....
 - Summary conclusion = soften language and mention it as "one of several possibilities" for traffic challenges in the area if that area is developed.
- **High School road** – Summary conclusions = strengthen language to focus more improvements for pedestrians safety, school zone, reduce speed limits, traffic calming etc. as traffic "will always go there"
 - Basically that HS road needs to be addressed as both the EW connector and Tribal trail connector will not solve the problems on HS road
- **Tribal trails connector** – Summary conclusion = no changes in language – leave as is
- **Timing of considering 5.6 for development** –
 - "Infill first" language should be considered in all new areas (Mark O) – unsure that was generally agreed to or not?
 - Tie are to growth management plan, urban growth boundary – all generally concurred
 - Clarify "if necessary" language – make firm, defined, conditional - Melissa
 - Clarify density - not just "adjacent neighborhoods" – which neighborhoods, Cottonwood Park or Ellenwood (Babara)
 - Summary conclusion of Bruce = "tighten it up more, tie to growth management plan"

Area 10.1

- Summary conclusion = leave as written

Area 10.2

- Summary conclusion = leave as written – let the County review
- Bob's comment – connectivity between subdivisions language "too aggressive" – not sure where that conversation ended?

Misunderstandings I noticed:

Things I learned that you should consider in your introduction to the County group this afternoon:

- Clarify that all growth management goals are met in the identified transition areas while seeking conservation/preservation of the identified rural areas.
 - That an important portion of the plan is to stay within "no more than twice the build environment"
- Rodio grounds – current location is committed under a 24 year lease to the fair board.
- That the Tribal Trails connector and the east-west connector in area 5.6 are two different road sections.
 - That there is an easement for Tribal Trails but not one for the theoretical east-west connector in area 5.6.
- That the unmapped existing wildlife movement corridors east-west and north-south (apart from the identified Flat Creek corridor that you did map in areas 10.1 and 10.2) is causing some confusion (I know this is a green change I have pointed out – but the current missing wildlife corridors did influence the 10.2 discussion).

Items of importance to staff that were never brought up for discussion:

- You never brought to discussion in 5.6 two red items of staff that should be discussed with the County:
 - "Add allowance for location of PRD development"
 - "Add vision for redundant streets, variety of housing types, wildlife permeability if developed"

See you this afternoon.

Rich

Alex Norton

From: Rich Bloom [southpark@bresnan.net]
Sent: Thursday, January 12, 2012 8:02 PM
To: Alex Norton; 'Bruce Meighen'
Cc: Shawn Hill; Tyler Sinclair; Jeff Daugherty
Subject: Town Summaries for 5.6, 10.1 and 10.2

Alex and Bruce – I know you have the tapes etc., but following is my take on where the County landed on areas 5.6 and district 10 – let me know if I got it wrong.

Area 5.6

- In-fill first discussion – Outcome = the in-fill language stays.
- PRD addition discussion on earlier “opportunities”
 - Outcome = redraft in-fill section – “promote infill, leave open opportunities resulting in permanent conservation of open space via the PRD - if applications come before “in-fill” (Town and other complete neighborhoods) is accomplished.”
 - Hank added “unique workforce housing opportunities” in addition to earlier consideration before in-fill occurs – but emphasis remains on permanent open space conservation - and workforce housing secondary.
 - Outcome = Paul V. said no on the housing addition suggested by Hank. I do not have in my notes of any other electeds agreeing with Hank (just Paul Dunker and Peter) – not sure where this ended?
 - Uses in district – residential only – other? – Outcome = residential focus – but a “little bit” of mixed use.
 - Not sure where staff’s suggestion for discussion on: “Add vision for redundant streets, variety of housing types, wildlife permeability if developed”
 - Outcome = These ideas were never discussed by the group according to my notes – and they are red changes.
- Boundary of district – Outcome = no change

Area 10.1

- Outcome = leave as written

Area 10.2

- Outcome = leave as written

Good luck the next few weeks compiling all of these “agreed” upon changes – along with what remains as written – plus your green changes.

Rich

Alex Norton

From: Rich Bloom [southpark@bresnan.net]
Sent: Saturday, January 14, 2012 12:28 PM
To: Alex Norton
Cc: Tyler Sinclair; 'Bruce Meighen'; Shawn Hill; 'Bruce Meighen'; Paul Vogelheim
Subject: RE: Town & County Summaries for 5.6, 10.1 and 10.2

Alex – thanks – I hope the public sees the changes at least several days before the January 26 meeting.

Two green changes I hope staff will suggest based on the meetings we just had – and also since it is likely now that all “attributes” will be stripped from the maps including wildlife migration corridors.

First green change:

- In the existing general text introduction to district 10 you note on page IV-63, first paragraph *“however the intensity of wildlife vehicle collisions on South HWY 89 shows the importance of the District’s open space for wildlife movement as well.”*
- In the area 10.2 specific description on page IV-65 (last paragraph) you get the basic biology incorrect by stating *“The most important of these open spaces is the area between Flat Creek and the highway. This area not only provides the scenic gateway in Town, but also provides an open area for a wildlife crossing of the highway that would feed wildlife into a preserved Flat Creek corridor.”*
- I already pointed out the science demonstrates elk and other large ungulates actually move east and west across area 10.2 (also similarly through area 10.1) - as well as north and south throughout both area 10.1 and 10.2 – not just along the Flat Creek corridor. This was discussed tangentially at the County meeting by Paul Vogelheim on the inconsistency of wildlife corridor mapping across the districts.
- Green change suggestion would be to align the statement on page IV-65 area 10.2 (last paragraph) with the statement on page IV-63 (first paragraph). I would suggest a biologically more correct replacement on page IV-65 be: *“The most important of these open spaces is the area between Flat Creek and the highway. This area not only provides the scenic gateway in Town, but also provides an open area for a wildlife crossing ~~of the highway~~ to move through the district. ~~that would feed wildlife into a preserved Flat Creek corridor.~~”*
- If corridors are mapped in an illustrative way (versus 100% accurately) then I believe Paul Vogelheim noted early in the meeting that they be consistent across all districts – by default that would include areas 10.1 and 10.2. I think if you do drop the wildlife corridor illustrative mapping (I would like it to stay) – you should still identify the known, and verified, wildlife collision hot spots on the map’s highways which do line up to JH Wildlife Foundation’s previous documentation and mapping, along with the recent WTI report the County helped to fund. The three district 10 mapped crossing hotspots (termed “wildlife crossing”) - do in fact line up with both of these reports - so no changes would be needed beyond clarifying that they are *“wildlife crossing collision hot spots”*.

Second green change:

- Given the discussion at the County of not fully understanding *“If development does occur, the agricultural open spaces will be preserved by directing the development potential from the area ~~into or adjacent to existing developed areas to the north or south.~~”* I suggest in 10.2 on page IV-65, last paragraph (staff also suggested something similar at the County meeting) that the awkwardness of *“into or adjacent and existing development”* be addressed. The County also unanimously affirmed to tie 5.6

earlier timing (before in-fill) to opportunities of a PRD that would preserve the adjacent lands to the south.

- Logically then I would simply change, as staff suggested at the meeting to the commissioners, to along the lines of: *"If development does occur, the agricultural open spaces will be preserved by directing the development potential from the area ~~into or adjacent to existing developed areas to the north or south.~~ into area 5.6.*

Map corrections already noted to staff – also green changes:

- The map on page IV-62 has left out the entirety of northern Flat Creek to HWY 89 portion of the Lockhart's property.
- The map on page IV-36 incorrectly locates the possible school zone expansion line on the southern boundary of the existing High School. Simply bring it up to match the boundary.

I hope this is helpful and fully consistent with green changes and/or the electeds direction.

Thanks - Rich

From: Alex Norton [<mailto:anorton@tetonwyo.org>]
Sent: Friday, January 13, 2012 5:00 PM
To: Rich Bloom
Subject: RE: County Summaries for 5.6, 10.1 and 10.2

Rich,
Thanks for your notes and attendance at the meetings. We are putting together our notes and will include the direction from both meetings in the staff report for the PC Hearing, if we don't post it earlier. Have a good weekend.
Alex

Alex Norton
Senior Planner: Teton County Planning Department
307-733-3959
PO Box 1727 | 200 S. Willow St.
Jackson, WY 83001

Alex Norton

From: Jhwildflowerinn@cs.com
Sent: Monday, January 16, 2012 1:28 PM
To: Jeff Daugherty; Irina Adams; Alex Norton; Susan Johnson
Subject: Growth on Village Road

Interesting headlines Monday, January 16. I have been attending meetings for over 4 years regarding how the residents of Teton County actually want the new, updated Comprehensive Plan to look. What I heard and stated at these meetings does not mesh with what the Teton County Commissioners and Planning Commissioners are quoted as wanting in this article.

More growth at Teton Village? With more growth, it will become more like a village? Excuse me...it is Teton Village. It was more like a village prior to the Four Seasons being built.

Where will the traffic go? Down the already crowded Highway 390? Through the underdeveloped, seasonal Moose-Wilson Road? The park will love that. And I believe they will close it or make it one way if traffic becomes even more congested than it is already in the summer. What happens in a disaster? I have seen the traffic backed up to our house which is north of the Aspens on busy ski days, when there is an accident near the bridge and even with accidents on 22. What happens if there is a major earthquake? How will an evacuation happen? We only have one bridge and one road 6 months of the year.

Have you been at the intersection of Highways 22 and 390 when residents are commuting to/from work or school? Let's put more cars on the road? And believe me, there will be more cars. It is idyllic to think that it will be a self-contained "village". Even if one person is employed in the Village, you can be certain that the other will have a job in town, a class to take, a meeting to attend, a dentist appointment, a movie to see, a child to pick up from school.

The Aspens area...ditto for the above. "Coupled with a push to allow for more residential development?" I would like to invite those persons who are pushing for more development to please write their desires here...because I did not hear their voices at the meetings I attended. I heard neighbors wanting to retain the quality of their neighborhoods, to protect wildlife and a way of life.

More density in the Aspens area? Why? It is a congested mid-stop on a busy highway already. And just because we have a few small, local services like a neighborhood market, coffee shop, bank, dry cleaning drop off; you feel we are primed for a larger population? Or are you suggesting that we need additional new commercial development? Last I heard, we have undeveloped existing commercial lots and spaces in the Pines, the Aspens and Teton Village.

I can see it now...a new Smith's across from the Aspens!

Growth. It is really a good thing? Maybe it is time that we do better with what we have and stop wanting more.

Sherrie Jern
Resident of the Aspens area since 1976.
</HTML>

Alex Norton

From: Pete Karns [petekarns@bresnan.net]
Sent: Monday, January 16, 2012 11:56 AM
To: feedback@jacksontetonplan.com
Subject: workforce housing

One of the dowfalls of creating land use rules and regulations is the "law of unintended consequences". Unfortunately, we already have some unintended consequences as a result of the Plan that is currently in place.

Every day there are hundreds of our Jackson Hole workforce that commute from Star Valley and Idaho to get to their jobs. These commuters waste hundreds of man hours while on the road. They burn thousands of gallons of fossil fuel.

They create tons of CO₂. Many of them have been seriously hurt in accidents getting to and from their jobs. Some have even died.

I am sure that our planners did not create this scenario on purpose when they were creating the current land use plan. However, I do consider this a failure on their part not to foresee what was going to happen.

The unfortunate thing is that many of these workforce people would not be making this commute if they could find rental housing in Jackson Hole.

During the boom years leading up to the economic downturn in 2007, apartment projects had waiting lists and people with jobs had no choice but to go outside the valley to find housing. Today, the problem is not as bad but still exists.

If there is such a large demand for apartments in Jackson Hole, then why hasn't the private sector stepped up and built more apartment buildings?

The answer is simple. There is not a zoning district in our current plan that adequately provides for the building of apartments. The only zoning district where apartments are feasible also allows condominiums and townhouses in the same district. It is far more profitable to build condos and townhouses and therefore they win out over apartments. What's more, even if a developer were to consider building apartments, the current zoning doesn't allow high enough density to make apartments economically feasible.

There is a solution to this problem but it would take a major change in the direction that our planners are headed. The first step would be to create an entirely new zoning district in the Plan. This district, let's call it Workforce Housing, would need two major components. First, it would need to allow very high density multifamily housing. Secondly, it could not be subdivided. This would prevent it from being converted to condos at a later date. These two components would separate Workforce Housing from the current AR Residential zoning where condos and townhouses would continue to be built.

These two components would also provide the opportunity and would carry the financial incentive for free enterprise to then step up and create the housing.

The second step would be to find an area suitable to build such a project. I do not believe that there are any opportunities within the Town of Jackson to build such a project (except maybe the Rodeo Grounds if it were to be moved out of town). This leaves the north end of South Park as the next possibility. There may be other areas in the valley that could be considered.

Some would say that building large apartment complexes in Jackson Hole would bring unwanted growth. I look at it differently. We would not be adding more people to the valley. Instead, we would be bringing home those people who already work here but are forced to live elsewhere. At the same time, we would be saving the environment, cutting back on pollution, reducing the use of fossil fuels, eliminating wasted man hours and possibly even saving lives. Let's get our workforce back in Jackson Hole where they belong.