

**MINUTES  
SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING &  
WORKSESSION  
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2014  
3:30 P.M.  
ALTA COMMUNITY CENTER  
ALTA, UTAH**

1. The Mayor called the meeting to order at 3:30 P.M. All members of the Town Council were present.
2. WORK SESSION: 0:40-Discussion on Planning Commission recommendations to amend the height, coverage and setback provisions in the Base Facilities Zone of the Alta Land Use Regulations and to add a section addressing height limits, physical building step-backs and screening requirements for mechanical equipment, elevator towers and other such rooftop appurtenances.

Mayor Pollard prompted Cliff Curry to introduce his "Proposed Ordinance Recommendations." Cliff stated this his intent was to create building regulations that could be applied more evenly throughout the Base Facilities Zone (BFZ), particularly on the south side of Highway 210. More specifically, Cliff stated his preference was to avoid creating zones "A, B, and C." Cliff observed that his proposed ordinance recommendations are based mostly on the Alta Planning Commission's most recent version of these recommendations.

Mayor Pollard stated his concern regarding the Peruvian Lodge's lot in relation to SR-210. Specifically, the Mayor stated that a 25' height restriction tied to SR-210 would unreasonably restrict development on the Peruvian's lot. The Mayor also recognized concerns stated by residents in the Peruvian Acres neighborhood about the possibility that the Peruvian Lodge could be developed into a very large building which would restrict the local viewshed.

Cliff stated that concerns about the size of the Peruvian Lodge as restricted by proposed height and lot coverage ordinances originally motivated the development of his proposals, and opined that if the view of various lodges from SR-210 was the most important factor in determining height restrictions, then such a restriction could be applied equally to the Peruvian. Cliff observed that perhaps a special setback restriction from SR-210 could be applied to the Peruvian Lodge, and the Mayor responded that doing so would be similar to establishing zones "A, B, and C" as proposed by the Planning Commission.

Cliff made an example of the Alta Lodge, observing that simply restricting building height in proposed Zone "A" to 25' above SR-210 would allow the Alta Lodge to become as tall as 108' further down slope from SR-210.

Mayor Pollard and Paul Moxley both opined that it may be unfair to restrict a single property which sits on a unique lot by applying a uniform height regulation.

Elise Morgan stated that the view from the road was not the only consideration, and observed that the Alta Ski Area transfer tow was another common viewshed. Cliff stated that his recommendations take that very issue into consideration, although he avoided describing particular viewsheds in order to make the proposed ordinances protect a greater range of views. Harris Sondak stated he understood Cliff's suggestion that building height be tied to adjacent "established grade."

Cliff summarized his concern with the Planning Commission recommendations by stating that he found the proposed height restrictions may not be effective in achieving the community's objectives.

Mayor Pollard opined that there is no perfect formula to achieve the community's objectives in regards to these proposed ordinances.

The Council discussed coverage recommendations, and Mayor Pollard stated he would be open to a coverage regulation of less than 75% based on comments from members of the public.

Harris asked where the Council was in terms of making a decision independent of the report from the Planning Commission on the issue of condos in the Base Facilities Zone – Harris remembers from previous meetings that the Council was going back and forth on this issue. Mayor Pollard thought the decision on the issues put forth by the Planning Commission was a first step that people could use to formulate a plan - suggested that lodge owners could use these "building envelope" regulations to begin looking at design possibilities. Elise observed that the Planning Commission may not be able to make a recommendation on condominiums soon.

Paul asked what the Council needs to do in order to move forward with ordinances. Elise observed that the currently the issue of building height is the most challenging issue. Mayor Pollard stated that public notification requirements prevent including a vote on a land use ordinance on the agenda for the upcoming November Town Council meeting, and Paul urged the Council to prepare to approve ordinance language in December or January so that lodge owners could proceed with planning improvements.

Mayor Pollard asked whether Planning Commission ordinance recommendations indicate specific height restrictions. Elise observed that, in the example of the Alta Lodge, the hypothetical maximum height of 108' would be broken up by the proposed architectural step-back. Elise opined that in order for building height restrictions to be most reasonable, the Council should adopt the Planning Commission's recommendation for establishing zones "A, B, and C."

Cliff highlighted another element of his proposal, which is the definition of "established grade." Cliff has noted that the proposal dated 7-15-14 establishes the term "finished grade," whereas Cliff's proposed definition of established grade defines it as *"the grade of the earth existing before a site has been prepared or changed for purposes of building."*

The Council discussed Cliff's proposed height restrictions for areas north of SR-210. Mayor Pollard and Elise observed that only two small parcels north of SR-210 are zoned BFZ. Cliff explained the two alternate height restriction proposals for areas north of SR-210.

Harris and Cliff discussed the importance of using SR-210 as an “index” to measure height against, and Cliff stated that his proposal seeks to avoid using SR-210 as a benchmark. Mark Haik suggested that building height restriction could be based on an assessment of mean elevation of any given parcel. Staff described in-house capabilities to compose rough renderings of this concept with GIS software. Cliff suggested that a better standard may be to use the mean elevation of the building envelope. The Council discussed this concept at length and the Mayor suggested it may be better to return to height regulations based on SR-210.

Staff asked if there were specific items or exhibits which could help the Council move forward with these proposals. Cliff stated that he would like to see visual models of what specific buildings would look like given the proposals. Paul suggested a chart describing how specific buildings would be constrained by the proposals, and stated that the three zones within the BFZ should be established. Mayor Pollard suggested that the Council should move forward with the Planning Commission’s recommendations, change the 75% coverage restriction to 60%, and incorporate some of Cliff’s language amendments. Harris and Paul concurred with the Mayor. Elise stated that she prefers zones “A, B, and C,” is open to reducing the coverage restriction from 75% to 60%, wants to include some of Cliff’s language amendments, and is open to incorporating Cliff’s recommendation for restricting height based on “adjacent established grade.”

Harris asked whether determining height on an individual basis in zone C is legally defensible, and Elise observed that Town of Alta legal counsel was involved in writing the portion of the Planning Commission’s recommended height regulations setting forth “relevant considerations.” Mayor Pollard suggested that a uniform maximum height restriction could be applied to all of the BFZ.

Mayor Pollard asked whether it would be possible for staff to prepare a version of the Planning Commission recommendations which incorporates Cliff’s language amendments. Cliff proposed that the new document include a 65% coverage regulation. Mayor Pollard stated he wants to see the document in as close to an adoptable format as is possible.

### 3. UPDATE AND DISCUSSION ON MOUNTAIN ACCORD.

Mayor Pollard presented a map generated by the Mountain Accord Economy System Group, which indicated a “grand loop” fixed guideway transit system running up Little Cottonwood Canyon, through a tunnel to Brighton, and through another tunnel to Park City, before continuing north to Kimball Junction. The map also indicated that the economy system group feels limited additional development in the Town of Alta “Commercial Core” would complement such a transit system. Mayor Pollard emphasized that he has made it clear that the Town of Alta supports the concept of such a development, as it would provide transit passengers a “landing spot” while meeting a long-term community goal of establishing a “town center,” but that the Town does not support large scale real-estate development in Alta.

Mayor Pollard stated that he'd been advocating for the "grand-loop" transit concept. Harris asked how public support for that concept had been evaluated, and the Mayor described conversations with community members he'd had throughout the Mountain Accord process, and stated that he wanted to hear more from the Council about their orientation to Mountain Accord. Elise described her intent to represent the best interests of all the businesses in Alta in her membership on the Recreation System Group. Mayor Pollard described his advocacy for the need to preserve the Town of Alta's unique character, and Town Marshal Mike Morey, a member of Mountain Accord Transportation System Group, described his emphasis on the need to make improvements to the current roadway. Mike observed that the transportation group seems unlikely to support a significant fixed guideway transit investment in Little Cottonwood Canyon which does not connect at least to Big Cottonwood Canyon if not the Wasatch Back. Mike described his concern that agencies involved in Mountain Accord do not understand the notion of "capacity" in Little Cottonwood Canyon. Elise observed that the end of the system group process is by no means the end of Mountain Accord, and that system group recommendations will not necessarily be reflected in the proposed actions taken into environmental analysis in Mountain Accord phase 2.

Harris described hearing from community interests who do not support the "grand loop" transit system. Harris opined that a connection to the Wasatch Back could affect the competitiveness of our local business community in certain ways. Elise stated that she feels the Town has made regular efforts to engage the community throughout Mountain Accord, through dedicated public meetings, regular updates at monthly Council meetings, and through the Mountain Accord public outreach program. Harris observed that the "end-of-the-road" nature of Alta is attractive to a lot of people.

Cliff opined that a train in Little Cottonwood Canyon is not the right solution for a variety of reasons. Cliff observed that comparisons of the Wasatch Mountains to mountain ranges in Europe are not appropriate, given the very small size of the central Wasatch mountain range. Cliff stated he felt that a bus rapid transit-type system would be more adaptable to seasonal usage fluctuations, and possibly more likely to advance technologically. Cliff suggested that Alta does not need and would not benefit from a transit connection to the Wasatch Back.

Paul opined that a connection of some kind to Big Cottonwood Canyon and the Wasatch back would be valuable and unique. Harris described his interest in an aerial transportation option, and offered the example of the enhancement of Interstate 70 through the Vail, Colorado area as a transportation improvement which negatively affected the character of a previously quiet, unique mountain community.

Elise described a transit alignment proposal which brings a train up the bypass road. Mike observed that the concept of a train in Little Cottonwood Canyon has been well-vetted from a variety of angles. Harris stated that if the Town is going to support evaluation of a train in Little Cottonwood Canyon, than it needs to be as strong as possible in its orientation to that process, and to how it might shape development in the Town of Alta.

Marcus Dippo observed that the proposed transit scenarios for Little Cottonwood Canyon do not include a bus rapid transit system. Cliff observed that improved local bus service is not the same thing as bus rapid transit, and several Council members agreed that improved local bus service for Little Cottonwood Canyon will not be an effective solution.

4. MOTION TO ADJOURN

**Hearing no further business before the Town Council, there was a motion by Harris Sondak to adjourn the Town Council meeting. There was a second by Elise Morgan, and the motion was carried.**

Passed and approved this 13th day of November, 2014.

S/Katherine S.W. Black  
Town Clerk