

Alta Planning Commission Meeting Summary
Community Center/Library, 10361 E. Hwy 210, Alta, Utah
May 19th, 2014

IN ATTENDANCE:

Planning Commissioners: Joan Degiorgio, Jan Striefel, Skip Branch, Rob Voye, Elise Morgan, Jon Nepstad, Roger Bourke (on the phone), Mayor Tom Pollard (ex officio member).

Town of Alta Staff: John Guldner, Liz Schulte (counsel)

Members of the public: Mark Haik, Allen Orr, Dave Eichel, David Pratt, Marcus Dippo, and Ryan the videographer.

INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR:

Joan Degiorgio reviewed the agenda for today's meeting.

1:30-UPDATE ON RECENT EVENTS, STAFF:

John Guldner updated the Planning Commission (PC) on Haik v. Town of Alta, *et al.* One member of the three-judge panel that heard oral arguments has passed away; no verdict has been reached at this time. The United States Forest Service (USFS) and the Town of Alta (Town) continue to pursue the conveyance of a parcel of land to the Town. The roughly two-acre parcel, located just west of the current post office and library, will hold a community center, trailhead, additional parking, and other public facilities. The process of acquiring this parcel will proceed slowly. **John** stated that the Town issued excavation permits for parcels in Albion Basin, but that owners of those parcels had been granted water rights through a transfer of water rights that has been stayed in a lawsuit filed by several concerned parties. **John** described the relationship between the Utah Department of Commerce and the Town: the Town pays one percent of its total building permit revenue to the State, and the Town must meet State requirements regarding building officials, building code, and other aspects of building and development in Alta. **John** discussed cases of Albion Basin cabin owners who sought permission to tear down old cabins and rebuild. Salt Lake City Public Utilities does not allow such activity on parcels in Albion Basin, and also prohibits remodeling properties in ways that increase the water usage on those properties. **John** reported that he will serve on a committee to help revise the Salt Lake County Foothill/Canyons Overlay Zone (FCOZ). **Skip Branch** asked **John** whether the Shallow Shaft has requested building permits, and **John** stated that the Shallow Shaft will not proceed with remodeling plans until the Town adopts new zoning ordinances for the Base Facilities Zone (BFZ). **John Nepstad** asked whether an update on Mountain Accord (MA) is appropriate, and **John Guldner** added that MA system groups will be taking a month off their regular meeting schedule. **Mayor Pollard** reported that the system groups have generated a large body of information representing current conditions in the MA study area. **Joan Degiorgio** described the four system groups that have been convened to create a preferred scenario for transportation, land use, and recreation planning in the central MA in Phase One of Mountain Accord. **Roger Bourke** asked whether MA has a plan to address conflicts that will arise between various interests represented within MA, and **Mayor Pollard** described consensus building and conflict resolution at the MA Executive Committee and system group levels, and observed that significant common interests are apparent.

23:00-Approval of Minutes from the April 21st, 2014 Planning Commission Meeting

Minutes from the April 21st 2014 Planning Commission Meeting have not been prepared.

23:00-Discussion with Possible Action on the Town Council's Remand of Height, Coverage, and Setback to the Commission. Review of "Breifing Paper" to the Town Council Prior to the June 2nd, 2014 Joint Meeting

Joan moved the discussion to the briefing document **John Guldner** prepared in advance of the upcoming joint meeting between the Town Council (TC) and PC. **John** described the inventory of connections to the Town water system prepared by Friends of Alta (FOA), and State of Utah requirements for source capacity that dictate how much water is required for each of the connections to the Town water system. **John** mentioned a clause in State Drinking Water Source Capacity rules which allows a water system operator to receive a 10% reduction in requirements if a review of actual water consumption information reveals conservative usage patterns.

Participants discussed the current definition of a hotel room, which is that a hotel room is 600 square feet. This definition is a factor in hotel room density calculations, meaning that, for instance, 6 rooms measuring 100 square feet count as 1 hotel room when considering the maximum allowed density of *33 rooms per net developable acre*. Net developable acreage on Alta hotel properties was estimated by the Town in 1989 following the transfer of USFS parcels to hotel owners as private land. Several participants indicated that this is a challenging issue, and stated that reevaluating the definition of a hotel room needs to be a priority moving forward. **John** observed that other local governing entities define hotel rooms by square footage.

Mark Haik observed that if the Town achieves a 10% reduction in source capacity requirements by showing a pattern of conservative usage, then it could set itself up to violate its surplus water agreement if in the future, visitation and hotel capacity is higher in the non-ski season, meaning that our actual water usage is no longer "conservative."

Joan observed that the issue of Town water system source capacity is challenging. **Jon Nepstad** opined that the statement "we don't have enough water" is insufficiently specific, and that we need to clarify the apparent disconnect between Town of Alta Ordinances and State Department of Drinking Water rules for source capacity requirements. **Rob** asked how the Town should decide where its remaining available water should be used, and counsel **Liz Schulte** stated that the Town is allowed to determine an allotment system as long as that system has a rational basis. **Jon Nepstad** observed that as we consider the definition of a hotel room in the Town, in order for it to comport with State water requirements, we should recognize that it is the *people using water in a hotel room* that affect how much water is used in that room, rather than the size of the room.

Joan asked **John Guldner** to make a note in the briefing document stating that our definition of a hotel room does not comport with State of Utah Division of Drinking Water requirements, and

that given our current definition, we do not have enough water remaining in our surplus water agreement with Salt Lake City Public Utilities for BFZ hotel build-out.

Participants discussed other ordinance recommendations remanded by the Town Council to the PC, such as height, coverage, setbacks, et cetera. **Mayor Pollard** suggested that we need to include actual proposed ordinance language in consideration of these issues moving forward. Participants discussed the issue of whether graded, unpaved roads should be included in total lot coverage. **Allen Orr** recalled that TC members did not understand why the PC chose 75% coverage as the new limit.

Joan moved the discussion to remaining issues, including whether condominiums should be allowed in the BFZ and the need for the TC to clarify exactly what additional information it needs to move forward with the PC's recommendations. Participants discussed physical step-back, which **Mayor Pollard** suggested the TC felt was poorly addressed. **John** quoted the current recommendation for architectural step-back, which is that after four vertical stories, the exterior wall of the building must recess 15 feet inward. **David Pratt** of the Snowpine Lodge suggests that requiring developers to incorporate step-backs makes it difficult to connect vertical utility alignments in a cost-effective manner.

Jan moved to recommend that in zone A, buildings should be no more than four stories, or 48 feet tall, without a 25' setback in the horizontal dimension. **Jon Nepstad** seconded the motion, and the motion was carried.

Marcus Dippo asked about height restrictions in Zone C, which is the Shallow Shaft, Photohaus, and Alta Central "neighborhood," and several participants clarified that in Zone C, height restrictions are to be individually determined, and special considerations include the ability of Alta Central dispatchers to see the ski area and Highway 210 through the Town.

Mark Haik asked whether the staff briefing paper would be made available to the public prior to the June 2nd 2014 joint meeting. **Liz** stated that the paper would be part of the public record and that as such, it could be acquired from staff.

Discussion to Identify and Prioritize Planning Commission Activities for 2014 did not occur at this meeting.

1:36-MOTION TO ADJOURN

Rob Voyer made a motion to adjourn the Planning Commission Meeting, Jon Nepstad seconded the motion, and the motion was carried.

The content of the minutes is not intended, nor are they submitted, as a verbatim transcription of the meeting. These minutes are a general overview of what occurred at the meeting.

These minutes were passed and approved on _____

Chris Cawley, Assistant Town Administrator

*Audio Recordings are available online at <https://soundcloud.com/townofalta>.