

**Alta Planning Commission Public Hearing and Regular Meeting Summary
Community Center/Library, 10361 E. Hwy 210, Alta, Utah
November 2nd, 2015, 4PM**

IN ATTENDANCE:

Planning Commissioners: Joan DeGiorgio (chair), Jon Nepstad, Dave Abraham, Rob Voye, Mayor Tom Pollard (ex officio).

Town of Alta staff: John Guldner, Chris Cawley, Liz Schulte (counsel).

Members of the public: Onno Wieringa, Jen Clancy, Brent Pratt, Mark Haik, Marcus Dippo, Dave Eichel, Scott Briggs, Mark Vlastic and Jenny Hale (planning consultants, Landmark Design).

INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR

Planning Commission Chair **Joan Degiorgio** opened the meeting and introduced the meeting agenda items.

5:40-APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM JULY 6TH, 2015 MEETING

Jon Nepstad made a motion to approve the minutes from the July 6th meeting, **Dave Abraham**, seconded that motion, and the motion was carried.

6:50-APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 5TH, 2015 MEETING

Dave Abraham recommended minor changes to the description of a conversation between himself and **Chris Cawley** regarding the potential application of form-based code to the Town of Alta. **Chris** noted the proposed change. **Dave** made a motion to approve the October 5th, 2015 meeting minutes, **Rob Voye** seconded the motion, and the motion was carried.

8:45-PLANNING COMMISSION TO REVIEW WITH POSSIBLE APPROVAL A REQUEST BY THE SNOWPINE LODGE TO ESTABLISH SETBACKS ON THE SOUTHERN AND WESTERN PROPERTY BOUNDARIES AS PART OF THE LODGE'S EXPANSION PLANS.

John Guldner indicated that the planning commission's role in this case was to review proposed setbacks from the property boundaries of a planned lodge expansion. **John** reminded the planning commission that setbacks are individually reviewed and determined by the planning commission in the Base Facilities Zone ordinance. The Snowpine's proposed setbacks are 92 feet south side of the property, and 9 feet 10 inches on the west side. **John** mentioned that the Rustler Lodge setback from their adjacent property is nine feet, and that the total distance between the Rustler's current building edge and the Snowpine's proposed building edge would still permit a snowcat to remove snow from between the two buildings. **John** indicated that the Snowpine's proposed expansion will bring the building to 61 percent coverage, leaving four percent more coverage under the recently modified Base Facilities Zone coverage regulations.

Mayor Pollard stated he did not think the site plans presented so far are entirely accurate.

John Guldner introduced **Ely Merheb**, an architect designing the Snowpine Lodge's proposed expansion. **Ely** presented slides of a site plan for the proposed expansion, indicating that the project was still in the schematic or conceptual design phase. **Mayor Pollard** pointed out aspects of the design documents he thought were inaccurate, and **Ely** indicated that further stages of design would include a new land survey and civil engineering analysis of the property.

Ely presented documents depicting the design of the current Snowpine Lodge, and presented schematic drawings of proposed modifications to each level of the property. **Ely** pointed out elements of the current structure that will be maintained, highlighted entry/exit features on various levels, and indicated that the expansion will add 32 rooms to the Snowpine lodge, bringing the total room count to 53.

Jon Nepstad asked whether proposed modification to the property's street frontage will require coordination with the Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT). **John Guldner**, **Ely Merheb**, and **Brent Pratt**, Snowpine Lodge owner, agreed that such coordination would take place, and discussed the design of on-site parking and roadway interface.

Brent Pratt mentioned the issue of the Snowpine Lodge's exposure to avalanche hazard from slopes above the Town of Alta. **Brent** also discussed his intent to maintain the cozy, historic feel of the current Snowpine Lodge as they pursue expansion. **Joan Degiorgio** asked **Brent** what his anticipated timeline is for the project. **Brent** indicated that several major questions remained, and suggested that phase I construction could begin in Summer 2017.

Joan asked **John Guldner** if there is a recommendation from Town of Alta staff regarding the proposed setbacks. **John** recommended the planning commission approve the proposed setbacks on the west and south sides of the property. **Joan** asked for discussion of the recommendation, and **Jon Nepstad** asked **Ellie** to describe emergency evacuation on the property. **Ellie** indicated that emergency egress is designed on the fourth level of the schematic design, onto the street level. **Jon** asked whether approval of this situation will be contingent upon avalanche control measures or avalanche-specific design review, and **John Guldner** described Town of Alta requirements for site and design requirements related to avalanche exposure. **Brent Pratt** indicated he'd commissioned a study of avalanche paths which affect the Snowpine Lodge, and urged the Town of Alta to pursue a new paradigm of avalanche hazard reduction. **Brent** described that his study proposes barriers such as snow fences as the preferred method of hazard reduction in avalanche starting zones above the Snowpine. **Brent** also indicated that the building could be designed to provide emergency egress on all sides. **Mayor Pollard**, **Onno Wieringa**, and **Brent Pratt** discussed whether the distance between the Rustler Lodge's current eastern extent and the western extent of the proposed expansion was suitable for a snowcat to remove snow between the buildings.

Joan Degiorgio asked for a motion to approve the proposed setbacks of 9 feet ten inches on the west side of the proposed expansion, and between 80 and 92 feet on the south side. **Rob Voyer** made a motion to approve these setbacks. **Dave Abraham** recommended the planning commission approve an 80 foot minimum setback. **Jon Nepstad** seconded the motion. Several planning commission members asked additional questions about the schematic design. **The planning commission voted to approve the proposed setbacks.**

36:15-UPDATE AND DISCUSSION ON THE COMMERCIAL CORE PLANNING EFFORT

Chris Cawley described the process of creating a request for qualifications from consultants to execute a scope of work created by Town of Alta and Wasatch Front Regional Council staff. **Chris** indicated that among the five proposals received in response to the request for qualifications, the proposal created by Landmark Design indicated the strongest understanding of the task at hand, and of both the current and historic conditions in Alta. **Chris** introduced **Mark Vlasic**, project manager, and **Jenny Hale**, both of Landmark Design.

Mark Vlasic presented the scope of work and the rough project schedule to the planning commission, and discussed the team of sub-consultants convened to pursue specialty aspects of the scope of work. **Mark** described that his team will begin by researching current and historic conditions in Alta, and indicated that public meetings would begin in January. **Mark** described that the team would create “alternative” land use and transportation concepts between January and March, and would proceed to refine those alternatives into a preferred scenario. **Mark** described that the project will convene an advisory committee of community members and stakeholders to review various stages of the project, and mentioned that he’d create a project website intended to provide information throughout the project. **Mark** thanked Town of Alta staff for collaborating on the scope development process, and discussed the proposed project schedule in detail.

Jon Nepstad asked **Mark Vlasic** whether the project would consider the thousands of skiers visiting Alta every weekend stakeholders in the project, and **Mark** indicated the project team was looking forward to working with Alta Ski Area to figure out how to gather input from day-skiers. **Jon** opined that the open space and trails element of the scope of work was a critical aspect of the project. **Joan Degiorgio** reminded the commission and the consultants that there is a significant difference between summer and winter transportation scenarios.

Onno Wieringa, Alta Ski Area, recommended the project team reconsider a statement in the scope of work indicating that one goal of the project was to make the Town of Alta a viable player in Mountain Accord. **Chris Cawley** reflected on the status of Mountain Accord one year ago, and opined that many were concerned there would be a plan imposed on Alta by Mountain Accord. **Chris** suggested the purpose of the upcoming project was to create a more visionary future plan for Alta’s commercial core in order to more clearly state preferences relative to regional processes like Mountain Accord.

Onno asked whether the project team has dedicated consultants for economic and market feasibility, and **Mark Vlasic** indicated that Zion’s Bank Public Finance has been retained to focus on these aspects of the project.

Joan Degiorgio asked about Landmark Design’s experience with projects funded through the WFRC program, and **Mark** described several projects. **Mark Haik** asked **Mark Vlasic** whether he’d evaluated appropriate architectural styles present in Alta, and **Mark Vlasic** indicated his team had not yet made any such evaluations. **Brent Pratt** opined that design and planning of public, outdoor spaces was critical to this project and to Alta’s future. **Jen Clancy**, Friends of Alta, asked how the project will approach the possibility of a land exchange between Alta Ski Area and the United States Forest Service (USFS), which

would privatize a significant amount of land in the study area. **Mark** indicated that this variable will bear heavily on the alternative development phase of the project, and **Chris Cawley** agreed that planning and executing any additional development in the study area under the context of Alta's special use permit with USFS would be an entirely different task than planning related to private land. **Joan Degiorgio** suggested that given the possibility there would be a land exchange but that we don't yet know what base area land would be received, planning regardless of USFS land ownership makes sense at this stage. **Jen** asked whether the advisory committee will include business representatives, and **Mark Vlasic** suggested the committee should be broadly representative of community stakeholders. **Brent Pratt** indicated he is excited about the planning project and described the potential land exchange as a positive opportunity for the Alta community.

Joan Degiorgio thanked **Mark** and **Jenny** for their presentation.

1:20:00-DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The planning commission discussed various days of the week for standing meetings, and settled on meeting the first Monday of each month in 2016. **Joan** indicated the next regular meeting of the planning commission would take place December 4th, 2015.

1:21:57-MOTION TO ADJOURN

Rob Voye made a motion to adjourn the meeting, **Dave Abraham** 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 approved on February 1st, 2016.

S/ Chris Cawley
Assistant Town Administrator

*Audio Recordings are available online at soundcloud.com/townofalta.