

MINUTES
ALTA PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
Tuesday, July 28, 2020, 3:00 PM

**Meeting held virtually*

Alta Community Center, 10351 E. Highway 210, Alta, Utah

PRESENT: Jon Nepstad, Chair
Roger Bourke, Vice Chair
Rob Voye
Jeff Niermeyer
David Abraham
Mayor Harris Sondak (ex officio)

STAFF PRESENT: John Guldner, Town Administrator
Chris Cawley, Assistant Town Administrator
Polly Samuels, Legal Counsel

OTHERS: Jerrett Pelletier, Ennead Architects; Don Weinreich, Ennead Architects (via phone)

1. INTRODUCTION, DETERMINATION LETTER READING, AND WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR

Planning Commission Chair Jon Nepstad called the meeting to order at 3:05 PM. He opened the meeting by stating the following:

The Planning Commission Chair hereby determines that conducting a meeting at an anchor location presents a substantial risk to the health and safety of those who may be present at the anchor location. Pursuant to Utah Code Section 52-4-2074, and [Alta] Resolution 2020-R-12, the Chair relies upon the facts put forth by the Mayor in his July 7, 2020 determination.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE OCTOBER 22, 2019, PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

MOTION: Planning Commissioner Roger Bourke moved to APPROVE the October 22, 2019 Planning Commission meeting minutes, with one typo noted and corrected in the final draft. Planning Commissioner David Abraham seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Commission.

3. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE ALTA COMMUNITY CENTER FEASIBILITY STUDY (JARRETT PELLETIER, ENNEAD ARCHITECTS)

Planning Commission Chair Jon Nepstad explained that the Town of Alta had been discussing the potential for an Alta Community Center for several years. One hurdle in the past, however, was the issue of land and where the center could be located. In 2014, a congressional action conveyed

lands to the Town of Alta. In order to move forward with this project, an updated feasibility study was needed to those previously conducted in 2003 and 2008. Planning Commission Chair Jon Nepstad then turned the time over to Jarrett Pelletier, representing Ennead Architects, to present and discuss where they currently were at in the process of the most recent Alta Community Center Feasibility Study.

Mr. Pelletier noted that Don Weinreich, Management Partner for Ennead Architects, was also participating in the meeting via phone. He began by stating that they hoped to complete the study by the end of September 2020. They were currently working with a group of residents, with whom they met on a bi-weekly basis, to help advise Ennead Architects through the process. Additionally, they just started a community engagement process as of this week. In response to a question from Planning Commission Chair Jon Nepstad, Mr. Pelletier noted that the feasibility study would also include recommendations for programming based on the space available. Planning Commission Chair Jon Nepstad also asked if there would be any risks involved with the programming recommendations, and whether or not they would be supported by the market analysis. Mr. Pelletier stated there would not be a market analysis as part of the feasibility study. He explained that they would try and gain a sense for staffing needs of this type of facility, and whether or not it would support income-generated programs. Mr. Weinreich added that a market analysis component was not within the scope of their work at Ennead Architects.

Mr. Pelletier stated that as part of their proposal, they were working with a number of specialty consultants that would help evaluate the site and ideas for the facility. One issue of importance was the environment and ensuring the facility was highly sustainable. Additionally, they were working with a world-class structural engineering firm on the design of the facility. Mr. Pelletier stated that they approached this firm because the site was in an avalanche path, and the design of the facility needed to respond to that issue. Lastly, Mr. Pelletier noted that they were consulting with a construction company on materials that could be used for the facility.

Planning Commissioner Jeff Niermeyer asked if Ennead Architects had considered the limited construction window and how that would affect certain design elements. Mr. Pelletier and Mr. Weinreich responded that this issue would be discussed as they conducted the study. Mr. Pelletier reiterated that they would involve input from Alta residents in this process. Ultimately, the goal was to develop an efficient conceptual design to which a price and a value could be made, thereby allowing the fundraising process to begin.

Mr. Pelletier presented a chart documenting the feedback they were seeking from the Advisory Committee. Topics that would be reviewed by the Committee included site review and analysis, structural and environmental parameters, design concepts, and next steps. Strategies for community engagement included the use of a website (www.altacommunitycenter.com), small group dialogues, and open workshops (including town hall meetings). Mr. Pelletier presented a chart depicting the various full-time occupants, frequent users, and potential functions (including its curators) of the facility.

Planning Commissioner Jeff Niermeyer asked if there was a nexus to a potential transit hub relative to the community center. He also asked what role the community center play could play for shelter-in-place scenarios. Mr. Pelletier stated that these were great points and noted several

residents had expressed similar concerns. He added that Ennead Architects had a preliminary conversation with UDOT to determine the statuses of their projects, so they could identify how a community center would relate to a transportation hub.

When asked who was on the Advisory Committee, Mr. Pelletier listed the following individuals: Sara Gibbs, Nicole Henderson, Mike Maughan, Jere Wile, Tom Pollard, Harris Sondak (Mayor), and several Ennead employees.

Planning Commissioner Roger Bourke stated that according to the RFP, an estimated cost of \$10 million to \$15 million was listed. He inquired as to where within that range Ennead Architects anticipated they would fall on this project. Mr. Weinreich stated that they usually worked both ends against the middle. In other words, target budgets were considered when discussing costs with Big D Construction to determine a sense of how many square feet could be built within budget. From the other side, they would work with the community to determine its needs, and from there identify a project that synthesized information from both sides. Planning Commissioner David Abraham inquired as to who Ennead Architects was working with at Big D Construction, and Mr. Weinreich noted they were primarily working with Cory Moore.

Mr. Pelletier presented some of the site analysis that had been conducted up to this point in time. He noted that the site was long and narrow, and they had started to map out some of the easement from the highway. Using the aid of a concept drawing, he pointed out that there was already parking as well as existing structures on the site. One challenge would be addressing parking as it related to the space needed for the building. He then listed several key components involved in determining the best site configuration. Lastly, Mr. Pelletier presented a project schedule for the months of July, August, and September 2020.

Planning Commissioner Jeff Niermeyer stated that many Alta residents traveled during summer months. He asked if there were key stakeholders that would be engaged, or stakeholders that would potentially miss out on getting involved within the timeframe presented by Mr. Pelletier. John Guldner, Town Administrator, stated that the Advisory Committee had an extensive list of contacts with whom they were working. Furthermore, since so many operations were taking place via Zoom, he did not foresee any issues with community members having opportunities to be involved throughout this process.

Planning Commission Chair Jon Nepstad asked if any feedback had been received with regard to mixed-use, such as commercial/retail, or was the overall desire for this project 100% community oriented. Mr. Pelletier stated that most of the feedback they had received was geared towards a public space for the community. He anticipated that the facility would have some commercial activity, such as a food service, so that the building could be financially self-sustaining.

Polly Samuels, Legal Counsel, asked if there were any restrictions with the conveyance from the U.S. Forest Service in terms of use, as long as the primary use was for the community center. John Guldner, Town Administrator, stated that there would not be any issues in having a small retail outlet. There were only issues when the retail became more substantial than a small gift shop and food service. Additionally, there were restrictions on the use of RDA money.

Planning Commissioner David Abraham asked about the base zoning. Mr. Guldner responded that the property in question was zoned FR-50, which could be used for basically anything; however, the property was located in the Town's commercial zone and could be rezoned if necessary. He then reviewed the rezoning process, noting that the item would need to come back to the Planning Commission for review prior to approval from the City Council.

Planning Commission Chair Jon Nepstad asked if there was a revenue source identified for this project beyond the feasibility study. Mayor Harris Sondak stated that the CRA could generate enough money to pay the costs of a \$5 million bond, which covers approximately one-third of the project. Therefore, additional fundraising would be necessary. Mayor Harris Sondak stated that if any other commercial were built in Alta, that could also be included in the CRA as well. He noted that one resident approached him about donating \$1 million into this project. Beyond these sources, fundraising was yet to be determined.

Council Member Roger Bourke asked about tax increment funding used to solidify a bond. Mayor Harris Sondak stated that the Town created a Community Reinvestment Area (CRA) and the main source of funding for which was Snowpine. Prior to being rebuilt it was valued at approximately \$1.5 million; however, now that it was rebuilt it was valued at \$11.5 million. The Town could therefore get up to 75% of the tax on the difference of that valuation. The first step in claiming those funds was to create the CRA, which had been done with the help of the County. Mayor Harris Sondak stated that no money was spent upfront in this effort. There was further discussion on potential funding sources for this project.

4. DISCUSSION WITH DIRECTION ON THE DARK SKIES LIGHTING EFFORT

The Planning Commissioners briefly discussed Comet NEOWISE. Planning Commission Chair Jon Nepstad noted that during the October meeting, the Planning Commission had a tour with Aubrey Larsen and Sophie Bellina from the State's Community Development Office overseeing dark skies. Planning Commission Chair Jon Nepstad asked if the Planning Commissioners were interested in addressing this matter in the Town's ordinances, to which the Commissioners responded affirmatively.

As part of this discussion, sample ordinances from Torrey, Utah, and Ketchum, Idaho, were presented as examples. Per the staff memorandum, dated July 28, 2020, and presented to the Planning Commission prior to this meeting, the following options were noted for consideration:

1. Leave the ordinances the way they were. The current ordinance only addressed signs and parking area lights and restricted light overshoot to neighboring properties and roadways. There were numerous instances where the above conditions were not being met. The Town could begin a more stringent program of enforcement of those conditions. Success may depend on what level of grandfathering might exist for the current lighting.
2. They could instigate a new lighting ordinance like Torrey, Utah, which was much more comprehensive and aimed toward dark sky compliance. That ordinance required all new or replacement lights to be dark sky compliant but did not require retrofitting of existing lighting.

3. They could seek to adopt a new lighting ordinance that would give the town Dark Sky compliance, laying out an amortization schedule of five years, like Ketchum, Idaho's ordinance for all existing lighting to be brought into compliance.

The Commission discussed measures to educate the public on the benefits of preserving Alta's dark skies, such as through the website or newsletter. They discussed potential requirements that could be enforced to allow current residents to come into compliance with a new ordinance, as well as requirements to enforce for future development projects. As part of the Town's educational efforts, Planning Commission Chair Jon Nepstad suggested including a materials and resources list so that residents could have a better idea of how to replace current lighting fixtures. He stated that he wanted to make the transition as easy as possible for residents before an ordinance was even adopted. It was noted that both of the sample ordinances from Torrey and Ketchum included materials list. There was subsequent discussion on the matter.

5. NEW BUSINESS

The Planning Commissioners reviewed discussion points made during the previous two agenda items.

6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Planning Commission meeting was scheduled for September 8, 2020.

7. MOTION TO ADJOURN

Planning Commissioner Jeff Niermeyer moved to adjourn the meeting. Planning Commissioner Rob Voye seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous consent of the Commission.

Minutes Approved on _____, 2020.



Chris Cawley, Assistant Town Administrator