

MINUTES
SPECIAL ALTA TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
Tuesday, March 5, 2024, 4:00 PM
Alta Community Center, 10351 E. Highway 210, Alta, Utah

PRESENT: Mayor Roger Bourke
Councilmember Carolyn Anctil
Councilmember John Byrne (virtual)
Councilmember Elise Morgan (virtual)
Councilmember Dan Schilling

STAFF PRESENT: Chris Cawley, Town Manager
Mike Morey, Town Marshal
Jen Clancy, Town Clerk
Molly Austin, Deputy Town Clerk
Chris Otto, Assistant Town Manager (virtual)
Craig Heimark, Treasurer

ALSO PRESENT: Cameron Platt, Legal Counsel

ALTA TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

1. CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER

00:00:00

Mayor Bourke called the March 5, 2024 Special Alta Town Council meeting to discuss a resolution regarding the Utah Department of Transportation's (UDOT) Little Cottonwood Canyon (LCC) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to order.

2. DISCUSSION OF THE TOWN OF ALTA RESPONSE TO THE LITTLE COTTONWOOD CANYON ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

00:02:00

The discussion began with Carolyn Anctil expressing approval for addressing concerns about the Council's relationship with UDOT but had specific points to address. Anctil expressed appreciation for the initial focus on addressing Elise Morgan's concerns regarding the Town's relationship with UDOT. John Byrne expressed support for certain aspects of the letter but voiced concerns about potentially joining a chorus of opposition without effect and suggested the Town make improvements to specific sections of the draft resolution. Morgan expressed support for outlining immediate actions that can be taken regarding traffic congestion in the canyon, referenced discussions about the Alta-Snowbird Bypass Road, traction law enforcement, and Snowbird's merge points. Morgan also emphasized the

need for practical steps rather than solely rejecting the gondola proposal and echoed sentiments that advocated for focusing on present solutions unique to Little Cottonwood Canyon. Morgan suggested avoiding a resolution that mimicked those of larger entities like Salt Lake City or County, aiming for a distinct approach tailored to the LCC's needs. Morgan noted the prevalence of references to external letters and resolutions, proposing a more original stance for the council's actions. Mayor Bourke emphasized the importance of taking a clear stand on the matter due to the Town's significant stake in the issue. Morgan suggested focusing on actionable steps rather than simply opposing the gondola. Dan Schilling stressed the need to avoid alienating partners like UDOT while still expressing the Town's unique perspective. Anctil echoed the sentiment of breaking the Town's silence on the matter and supported the idea of expressing a unique viewpoint. Chris Cawley reminded the Council that the reference to the Jenny Wilson letter from the County was included because of direction from the Council in previous meetings.

Byrne pointed out inconsistencies between the proposed resolution and previous statements regarding phase one and phase two evaluations. Mayor Bourke highlighted the importance of expressing opposition to the gondola while still addressing the broader transportation issues. Schilling emphasized the Council's united position against the gondola and the need to address ongoing challenges. Anctil suggested revising section two of the resolution for clarity and consistency. Jen Clancy offered to assist with editing the document in real time. Morgan elaborated on her stance regarding the gondola proposal, emphasizing the importance of addressing both phase one and phase two outlined in the (EIS). While expressing personal reservations about the gondola, Morgan recognized its connection to broader issues such as tolling and its potential impact on the local business community. Morgan proposed several options for the Council's resolution, including crafting a comprehensive statement covering all aspects of the EIS, a specific resolution regarding the gondola, and a separate resolution addressing phase one and phase two developments. Morgan advocated for a nuanced approach that considers the multifaceted implications of the EIS on the Town's interests.

Mike Maughan addressed the Council, and suggested utilizing unspent funds allocated for addressing transportation issues in LCC, specifically the "red snake" traffic congestion. Maughan proposed redirecting these funds to address local concerns independently of the ongoing EIS. Maughan also questioned the potential impact on the business community if the Town took a stance against the gondola. Schilling emphasized the importance of the Town's opposition to the gondola, aligning with constituents' expectations. Anctil expressed appreciation for Maughan's comments and suggested incorporating them into the resolution. Mayor Bourke suggested keeping the first bullet point about the traction law in the resolution but possibly shortening it for clarity. Maughan provided additional context about the traction law and proposed a modification to tie it to snow forecasts rather than specific dates. Schilling expressed support for a blanket statement covering a specific time frame for the traction law. Byrne and Anctil also expressed agreement with the proposed changes. Jen Clancy made note of the edits accordingly based on the discussion.

There was further discussion about including language in the resolution to focus on short-term congestion problems and solutions that do not require an EIS. Craig Heimark suggested adding language to address congestion issues immediately without waiting for the gondola project to be

completed. Schilling proposed edits to simplify the resolution and emphasize the Council's request to utilize the estimated \$42 million allocated for addressing transportation hotspots in LCC. Maughan and Anctil discussed separating efforts to mitigate congestion at Snowbird from other congestion issues, such as keeping the mainline open. Overall, there were discussions about streamlining the resolution and highlighting the Council's support for immediate action on congestion problems. The discussion primarily centered around finding ways to address traffic congestion and ensure public safety in the canyon area. Maughan emphasized the need for an equitable merge between Alta and Snowbird traffic, considering the interests of both businesses and the Town's emergency services. Anctil suggested separating the merge point issue from other congestion mitigation efforts. The group agreed to leave certain bullet points unchanged and suggested addressing the EIS and potential projects not addressed in the EIS separately. Overall, the conversation underscored the complexity of managing traffic in the canyon and the importance of balancing various stakeholders' needs.

Anctil expressed concerns about tolling in the middle of the canyon and how tolling would affect delivery vehicles, suggesting that it might not effectively manage traffic as intended. Maughan echoed these sentiments, highlighting that tolling might not reduce congestion as desired and proposed other measures like parking reservations. Byrne noted the complexity of managing traffic shifts throughout the day. Heimark agreed with Maughan's points about tolling and proposed alternative tolling technologies for better traffic management. Schilling proposed the wording be formatted as an umbrella approach to entry control measures, including tolling, reservation verification, and traction compliance, suggesting that they all fall under the same category. Mayor Bourke expressed uncertainty about tolling as an entry control measure due to the lack of information and proposed exploring it further. Anctil suggested condensing the bullet points related to tolling into one statement supporting the exploration of tolling and other entry control measures. Maughan questioned whether this proposal should be its own section. Discussion ensued regarding the wording of the Council's position on tolling and the exploration of alternative solutions to traffic congestion, including a gondola construction proposal. The council debated whether to explicitly reject the gondola proposal or focus on mitigating traffic issues through other measures while keeping the gondola as a distant possibility. Ultimately, they aimed to find a balanced approach that acknowledged community concerns while remaining open to collaboration with other stakeholders.

Anctil also brought up suggestions from Margaret Bourke, a local resident, advocating for no roadside parking and enhanced bus services, which were deemed important for the Town's well-being. Maughan highlighted the challenge of replacing roadside parking and the importance of considering public safety. Byrne proposed urging further exploration of alternatives before committing to gondola construction. Schilling voiced opposition to the gondola as a solution but expressed willingness to collaborate on other mitigation measures. Mayor Bourke advocated for a clear stance against the gondola without caveats, emphasizing community sentiment. The Council discussed the need for a firm position while exploring various traffic mitigation options. Morgan emphasized the importance of addressing phase one and phase two developments comprehensively, considering the broader impacts beyond just the gondola proposal. Various council members expressed support for exploring alternatives to the gondola and emphasized the need for collaboration with UDOT on phases one and

two of the project. Concerns were raised about the wording of certain sections and the need for more comprehensive evaluation of transportation alternatives beyond the EIS.

Mayor Bourke reported on a meeting with UDOT about a concept to create a special district to fund and or operate transit services in the Cottonwood Canyons, although it was acknowledged that this idea is still in its early stages. The Council agreed to continue refining the resolution and work towards a consensus in future meetings. Overall, there was a consensus that while progress had been made, further discussion and refinement of the resolution were needed. The Council discussed exploring potential solutions, acknowledging that technology and regulations may change in the future. Schilling emphasized the importance of exploring possibilities and turning them into probabilities through detailed evaluation. Mayor Bourke expressed optimism about passing a resolution at the upcoming Town Council meeting. Overall, there was a sense of determination to address the transportation challenges facing the community.

3. **MOTION TO ADJOURN**

01:23:45

MOTION: Dan Schilling motioned to adjourn, and Elise Morgan seconded.

VOTE: All in favor. The meeting was adjourned unanimously.

RESULT: APPROVED

Passed this 10th day of April, 2024


Jen Clancy, Town Clerk