

**Alta Planning Commission Meeting Summary
Community Center/Library, 10361 E. Hwy 210, Alta, Utah
October 20th, 2014, 4PM**

IN ATTENDANCE:

Planning Commissioners: Joan Degiorgio (chair), Jan Striefel, Rob Voye, Roger Bourke (by phone), Mayor Tom Pollard (ex officio)

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

Members of the public: Marcus Dippo, Steve Schaefermeyer, Stella Day, Onno Wieringa, and a videographer.

INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR

Joan Degiorgio opened the meeting.

0:55-UPDATE ON RECENT EVENTS, STAFF

John Guldner reported on the conveyance of land from the United States Forest Service (USFS) to the Town of Alta (the Town). **John** described a successful protest by Town residents to construction of a fiber-optics hub building on unincorporated Salt Lake County land immediately west of the town boundary. **John** described a recent Town Council work session focused on the Planning Commission's recommendations for Base Facilities Zone (BFZ) ordinances regarding height, coverage, yard regulations, and other items, and indicated that the Council was particularly concerned with building height restrictions and the creation of three distinct "zones" within the BFZ. **Chris Cawley** described an emergency management project being pursued by staff. **Mayor Pollard** described the concerns of one member of the council who is interested in setting an objective height limit for "zone c," which is the small cluster of buildings north of Highway 210 near the Town of Alta office building. **Mayor Pollard** described a tour of the Town of Alta water system hosted by Keith Hansen and attended by US congressman Rob Bishop and Utah Transit Authority General Manager Mike Allegra.

13:35-APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE SEPTEMBER 15th PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

Jan Striefel made a motion to approve minutes from the September 15th Planning Commission meeting, **Rob Voye** seconded the motion, and the motion was carried.

14:15-DISCUSSION WITH POSSIBLE ACTION ON A PROPOSED RIDGELINE PROTECTION ORDINANCE

John described changes to the current draft ordinance based on Planning Commission input at the September 15th, 2014 meeting including the question of whether exemptions for possible lift alignments in certain areas were desirable. Generally, the Planning Commission felt it was important to write the ordinance to be as strong as possible, with language describing how exemptions to the ridgeline protection ordinance would be considered. **Roger Bourke** proposed that even that language should be excluded from this ordinance altogether, because anybody seeking a development which could violate the ordinance could seek a variance. **Joan** observed that in order to be granted a variance, one must be able to demonstrate they will not receive equal treatment under a rule or ordinance. **Onno Wieringa** described various measures the Alta Ski Lifts Company could take to meet the Planning Commission's interest in avoiding ridgeline view interruptions. **John** and **Jan** discussed the "grandfathering" of current structures, and **John** described how the ordinance could address existing ridgeline buildings, and future construction on the site of such buildings. **Joan** observed that excluding language providing exceptions to the ordinance meant that a developer would need to seek a variance from the Town Council,

effectively taking the Planning Commission “out of the loop.” **Joan** asked **Roger** whether he thought ordinance language requiring possible ridgeline view disruptions be considered by the Planning Commission should be included in the ordinance, and **John** observed that the role of the Planning Commission in this case is to develop the ordinance and indicate which ridgeline views are to be protected. **Roger** asked whether communities adjacent to the Town have their own ridgeline ordinances, and **John** observed that no other jurisdictions enforce such ordinances in areas adjacent to the Town.

Joan summarized the important comments from the discussion of a possible ridgeline ordinance, noting that the ordinance language regarding “hardship” shall be removed from the draft ordinance; that language will be added encouraging neighboring jurisdictions to consider the Town’s ridgeline ordinance in seeking to develop near a ridgeline on the Town of Alta boundary; that a “grandfather” clause needs to be clarified; and that the Planning Commission needs to select “viewpoints.” **Joan** stated that a revised ridgeline ordinance would be on the agenda for the November Planning Commission meeting.

49:00-DISCUSSION WITH DIRECTION ON AMENDING THE BASE FACILITIES ZONE ORDINANCE TO ALLOW CONDOMINIUMS

John described the source capacity requirements set by the State of Utah Division of Drinking Water for condominiums, which state that a condominium is required to have 800 gallons per day, as condominiums are considered single-family homes for this purpose. **Jan** suggested the bigger issue may be whether the community, and the Planning Commission, wants condominiums to be allowed in the Base Facilities Zone (BFZ). **John** described the initial reason why condominiums were disallowed in the BFZ was that condominiums are not as reliable for generating revenue as hotel rooms. **John** mentioned a letter from attorney **Steve Schaefermeyer**, representing the Snowpine Lodge, in which the Snowpine described aspects of their interest in adding condominiums to their property. **Rob** stated that he did not feel comfortable requiring condominium owners to rent their units, but also stated that establishing a “2 to 1” ratio of additional hotel rooms per condominium developed—as suggested by the Snowpine—was too low a ratio. **Mr. Schaefermeyer** stated that his letter was meant to provide a basis for ongoing conversation on this topic. **Roger** asked **Onno Wieringa** whether the Alta Ski Lifts Company still preferred to see hotel rooms to condominiums, and **Onno** stated that Alta Ski Lifts prefers lodging developments which provide a more regular source of revenue, and that hotel rooms are more reliable in this regard. **Joan** asked **Onno** whether condominiums would be more attractive if they provide lodge owners a means to acquire financing for general facility improvements, and **Onno** replied that this seemed like a good trade-off, particularly if lodge owners are required to build hotel rooms as well. **Mr. Schaefermeyer** stated that the condominiums the Snowpine hopes to build will be attached to the hotel amenities, which could make them more attractive in a rental pool than other condominium properties in Alta, none of which are attached to such amenities as a spa or a restaurant.

Joan addressed a briefing document staff provided to the Planning Commission for consideration of BFZ condominiums entitled “minimum requirements for allowing condominiums in the Base Facilities Zone.” Present members of the Planning Commission generally agreed with several elements of that document, including: a requirement that any condominium development be required to meet all building design restrictions; a requirement that any condominium development result in no net loss of hotel rooms; a requirement that condominiums be in a rental pool; a requirement that condominiums be accessed through a hotel front desk; and a requirement that condominiums be connected to hotel amenities. The Planning Commission acknowledged hesitations regarding the “rental pool” requirement and the “front

desk” requirement, and described the ways to revise those requirements. **Joan** asked staff to provide new requirement language which would achieve the objectives of the “rental pool” requirement and the “front desk” requirement.

1:12:30-DISCUSSION WITH POSSIBLE ACTION ON ADDING A MAP TO THE GENERAL PLAN IDENTIFYING THE “TOWN SITE” LANDS MENTIONED IN SECTION 3.17

Mayor Pollard stated he felt Section 3.17 of the 2005 Town of Alta General Plan should be updated once the land transfer is complete.

1:16:40-DISCUSSION ON POSSIBLE JOINT MEETING WITH THE TOWN COUNCIL FOR A FINAL PRESENTATION ON THE STATUS OF THE MOUNTAIN ACCORD SYSTEM GROUPS.

Mayor Pollard described an effort to contract with a planning consultant to illustrate a conceptual Town of Alta “Town Center” development. Staff has compiled information from recent public visioning processes, and **Mayor Pollard** intends for the project to elucidate the intent of the Alta Community to establish a developed location which provides a possible transit hub, a community center, various commercial elements, and an attractive public space. **Mayor Pollard** reiterated the statement that this project is intended to be an “executive summary” of previous visioning efforts, and acknowledged in addition that transit concepts being discussed in Mountain Accord have presented the need to begin planning for such a situation.

Joan stated that the Town Council and the Planning Commission should hold a joint meeting to discuss Mountain Accord, and observed that the “product” of the Mayor’s planning project would be a great subject for such a meeting. **Mayor Pollard** described the timeline of upcoming Mountain Accord milestones, and recognized the importance of communicating with the Alta community on the subject of the Mountain Accord “preferred scenario.” **Mayor Pollard** suggested that perhaps the Town Council could be invited to the November 17th Planning Commission meeting.

Jan opined that the most important thing to do regarding Mountain Accord could be to adopt a policy statement regarding where the Town of Alta sees a possible transit stop development taking place, although **Joan** and **Mayor Pollard** stated that such an action may not be necessary at this point. **Joan** observed that phase one of Mountain Accord is a long-term, visionary process, and as such, the kind of project **Mayor Pollard** has described could be a way to summarize and communicate the results of previous community visioning exercises, and that it will be timely.

1:39:45-DISCUSSION ON THE PLANNING COMMISSION’S MEETING SCHEDULE FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE YEAR AND OF THE TIME ALLOTMENT FOR EACH PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

Joan reflected communication from staff with the direction that a celebration for **Jan**, who will be resigning from the Planning Commission at the end of 2014 and for recently resigned Planning Commission member Skip Branch will take the place of a regular December meeting. **Joan** stated that the agenda for the November Planning Commission meeting will include Mountain Accord, a revised ridgeline protection ordinance, and continued discussion on condominiums in the BFZ, and also stated that the meeting will be allowed to extend until 6:00PM.

1:41:50-MOTION TO ADJOURN

Joan asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. **Rob** made a motion, **Jan** 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 December 15th, 2014.

S/ Chris Cawley
Assistant Town Administrator

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