

**Alta Planning Commission Meeting Summary  
Community Center/Library, 10361 E. Hwy 210, Alta, Utah  
October 5th, 2015, 4PM**

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

**Planning Commissioners:** Joan Degiorgio (chair), Roger Bourke, Rob Voyer, Dave Abraham and Mayor Tom Pollard (ex-officio). Absent: Jon Nepstad.

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

**Members of the public:** Onno Wieringa, John Byrne, Mark Haik, Elise Morgan, Marcus Dippo, Scott Briggs, Mimi Levitt, Jen Clancy.

**INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR**

**Joan Degiorgio** began the meeting and welcomed the planning commission as well as the audience.

**00:40 UPDATE ON RECENT EVENTS-STAFF**

**Chris Cawley** reported on the September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015 Planning Commission meeting, which featured a “walkabout” between a couple of locations along highway 210 through town. **Chris** mentioned that the agenda posted for the October 5<sup>th</sup> meeting does not indicate the planning commission will discuss a future meeting schedule. **Joan** opined that the commission had agreed to adhere to a meeting schedule following the first Monday of each month, and recommended that the minutes for the October meeting reflect that decision.

**3:47 APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE JULY 6<sup>th</sup>, 2015 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**

A quorum of planning commission members in attendance at the July 6<sup>th</sup> 2015 meeting were not present at the October 5<sup>th</sup> meeting, and **no action was taken on minutes from the July 6<sup>th</sup> meeting.**

**4:22 APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**

**Rob Voyer** made a motion to approve the September 23<sup>rd</sup> 2015 planning commission meeting, **Roger Bourke** seconded the motion, and the motion was carried.

**4:55 UPDATE ON COMMERCIAL CORE PLANNING PROCESS-Staff**

**Chris Cawley** stated that a “Request for Pool Letter of Qualifications”(RPLOQ) for consultant services to create a Town of Alta Commercial Core plan was submitted to five consulting firms on September 23<sup>rd</sup>, and that responses were expected on October 12<sup>th</sup>. **Chris** indicated that responses to the RPLOQ would not entail a complete scope of work, but would instead indicate each consultant’s understanding of the project and a general proposed timeline for the project. **Joan** asked about the staff memo presented to the planning commission, which recommended the planning commission discuss ways to make efficient use of consultant services to complete the project in a timely fashion. **Chris** described a few potential obstacles to the continuity of the project, including the situation of the holiday season within the likely timeline for the project, which will follow the ski area operating season; and the seasonal nature of Alta’s resident and visitor populations, which suggests that a project continuing into late April or May of 2015 may not enjoy broad public participation through its entire timeline. **Chris** suggested that the project would take around six months, and that it would likely start in November, and described the small “selection team” that will be reviewing consultant responses. **Chris** stated that Wasatch Front Regional Council (WFRC) administers the program through which the Town of Alta was granted funding for the project, and that because WFRC is responsible for reporting on the expenditure of those funds to

the Federal Government, the process of soliciting consultant responses, reviewing those responses, and selecting consultants is managed by WFRC.

**Roger Bourke** opined that the position of the 2015 holiday season within the likely timeline for the project is an advantage in that there are more people in Alta during that time of the year than during any other period. **Roger** recommended that the project capitalize on this situation, and **Dave Abraham** observed that the RPLOQ, which was presented for review by the planning commission at the October 5<sup>th</sup> meeting, indicated consultant responses must include plans for “robust stakeholder engagement.” **Joan** commended staff for their preparation of the RPLOQ. **Chris** observed that the RPLOQ presents a very broad, comprehensive scope of work for the project and opined that this could present a potential obstacle to the completion of the project. **Joan** opined that the inclusion of a “trails plan” in the RPLOQ was particularly valuable, as it will require the broader plan to consider trails and other significant factors in Alta’s summer environment. **Chris** observed that the RPLOQ specifically requests consultants prepare an “open space and trails plan,” and described that “open space” and “trails” are actually very distinct elements which ought to be considered on their own. **Chris** and **Dave** discussed the function of a “regulating plan” in the type of project the Town of Alta will undertake, and discussed the Wasatch Choice for 2040 “toolbox” items listed in the RPLOQ, which include “form-based code.” **Chris** opined that while the WFRC form-based code template may be more commonly applied in urban settings, significant code revisions may eventually be necessary to implement whatever vision for the Commercial Core is prepared, and that the principles behind form-based zoning and development regulations would be valuable for the Town of Alta. **Joan** asked Elise Morgan to report from the audience on the Town Council’s orientation to the Commercial Core planning project, and **Elise** indicated that the Town Council had not met since prior to the completion of the RPLOQ. **Elise** also mentioned the upcoming “Meet the Candidates” forum, and suggested that the town council and planning commission attempt to conduct joint meetings and workshops during the early stages of the project.

**Joan** asked the audience to share thoughts or concerns on the upcoming Commercial Core planning project. **Mark Haik** observed that the intent of the project is to make a plan for the center of the Town of Alta and not just for one designation of property ownership or another, and **John Guldner** described the difference between the terms “commercial core” and “base facilities zone,” which are often used interchangeably. **Chris Cawley** observed that the commercial core is a general planning principle with no legal definition, and opined that many people use the term “base facilities zone,” which is a formal, legal zoning designation in the Town of Alta, in place of the term commercial core, which leads to confusion of the two concepts. **Mr. Haik** concurred with this distinction, and suggested that the planning commission consider the survey prepared by the Bureau of Land Management of various parcels of land in the Town of Alta, including the recently conveyed parcels of United States Forest Service (USFS) land to the Town of Alta. **Elise** asked how closely the town intends to engage Alta Ski Area in this project, and **Chris** stated that while the RPLOQ indicated a general intent to engage Alta Ski Area’s base planning outlook, the specific extent to which ski area staff and planning concepts are engaged is yet to be determined. **Onno Wieringa** observed that the task of planning for USFS-owned land and private land are two very different objectives, and that the planning commission should consider that distinction as the project moves forward. **Scott Briggs** observed that much of the existing planning documentation on which the upcoming project will be based focuses on the Albion base area as the location of any future development in Alta, and opined that this may not be fit very well with rest of the Town of Alta’s layout and social activity.

**42:40--MOUNTAIN PLANNING DISTRICT—Wilf Sommerkorn, Salt Lake County**

**Joan** introduced Wilf Sommerkorn, Salt Lake County Planning. Wilf described that the Mountain Planning District is an “outgrowth” of Mountain Accord’s focus on collaborative, regional governance, and of upcoming changes to the status of unincorporated Salt Lake County. Currently, jurisdiction over land use in the Wasatch Front canyons, as in other unincorporated areas of Salt Lake County, resides with the Salt Lake County Planning Commission, which is comprised of residents of unincorporated Salt Lake County.

The Mountain Planning District planning commission will be comprised of residents of Salt Lake County. The goal of creating the Mountain Planning District is intended to preclude the piece-meal annexation of different areas of the Wasatch Front canyons, and to honor the extent to which the Wasatch Mountains are a regional resource. The Mountain Planning District excludes the Town of Alta, which will continue to hold land use jurisdiction in the area within its current boundaries. **Mr. Sommerkorn** described that the legislation authorizing the creation of the Mountain Planning District also stipulates a “sunset” for the provision, and that Salt Lake County’s authority to administer the district could be revoked by a certain date depending on certain conditions.

**Joan** asked the audience for questions. **Mimi Levitt** observed that plans for land use and transportation in the valley and in lower Little Cottonwood Canyon will have a tremendous effect on Alta, and asked whether the Town of Alta will have a voice in this new Mountain Planning District. **Mr. Sommerkorn** observed that the Town of Alta has been recognized as a participant and a stakeholder in most previous regional planning efforts for the Wasatch Mountains, and indicated that the Town’s participation in the Mountain Planning Commission could be explored further.

**1:04:00--MOTION TO ADJOURN**

**Joan** stated that the next meeting will be on November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2015. **Dave Abraham made a motion to adjourn the planning commission meeting, Roger Bourke seconded the motion, and the motion was carried.**

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The content of the minutes is not 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 November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2015.

S/ Chris Cawley  
Assistant Town Administrator

*Numerical annotation within section headings generally corresponds with audio recordings of Town of Alta meetings, which can be accessed at <https://soundcloud.com/townofalta>.*