

**MINUTES
CARBONDALE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
VIRTUAL WORK SESSION
AUGUST 18, 2020**

Mayor Dan Richardson called the August 18, 2020, virtual Work Session to order at 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Mayor	Dan Richardson
Trustees	Lani Kitching
	Marty Silverstein
	Heather Henry
	Erica Sparhawk
	Luis Yllanes
	Ben Bohmfalk

Staff Present:

Town Manager	Jay Harrington
Finance Director	Renae Gustine
Town Clerk	Cathy Derby
Planning Director	Janet Buck

ENVIRONMENTAL BOARD CHECK-IN

The Environmental Board (EBoard) was present (via Zoom) for the discussion.

Mayor Richardson and Janet Buck gave an overview of the land use development application process. Mayor Richardson explained that all land use applications must conform to the Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan) and adhere to the Unified Development Code (UDC).

The process is as follows: the applicant submits an application, staff reviews it, it then goes to the Planning & Zoning Commission, external organizations (if applicable), and then it goes to the Trustees. If it is a use by right application the only review is based upon UDC criteria.

Janet explained that the (Comp Plan) is updated every ten years however, staff is considering doing a small update in 2021.

Colin Quinn, Chair of the EBoard, asked if the EBoard should be involved in reviewing land use applications. Mayor Richardson asked what would be the intent of their review? Colin stated that the Comp Plan has three pillars of sustainability and since the environment is one of the pillars it makes sense that the EBoard review the applications.

Colin asked what is the role of the Climate Energy Plan, the Town Mission Statement and the Environmental Bill of Rights (EBOR) in the development application?

Scott Mills asked when the Comp Plan is updated does the EBoard participate as a Board, or do they do so as individual citizens? Trustee Henry stated that they will be stakeholders and will be participating as a Board.

Frosty Merriott suggested that that developers receive copies of the Comp Plan, EBOR, Mission Statement, Climate Energy Plan, etc. so they know what the Town expects.

Trustee Bohmfalk explained that when the Comp Plan was last updated the participants agreed that infill was a goal. As a result, buildings are bigger and there is less parking. The Green Building Code addresses Net Zero and other environmental aspect.

Summer Scott stated that the components of the EBOR in the Comp Plan are not well defined. Summer continued, and more definitive items should be outlined in the Climate Action Plan.

Trustee Sparhawk stated that clarifying items in the Climate Action Plan is the role of the EBoard. If the EBoard looks at all land use applications it will consume every one of their meetings.

Trustee Henry replied that the EBOR is intended to be high level statements. The EBoard should decide the level of specificity of the EBOR – however, it is not a quick process.

Colin inquired about the role of long-term planning for annexes, and is there a role for public input in the planning process?

Janet explained that the Comp Plan limits annexation – the Town wants infill, not sprawl. The Comp Plan addresses agricultural land, and land critical for open space. When doing an annexation, the applicant has to give the Town something above and beyond the normal standard – it's a negotiation. Jay noted that there is a moratorium on extending utilities outside of town limits and that is one way we control growth.

Trustee Silverstein stated that public input during COVID has increased. More people attend Zoom meetings than attended in person. He agreed we do need to continue to do outreach, and we need to communicate better.

Trustee Henry stated that updating the Comp Plan would be extremely difficult right now with COVID. We put the Plastics project on hold for this reason – we need all the tools available in order to be successful.

Summer stated that the Town needs better communication - putting information in the Sopris Sun and on KDNK only reaches a specific demographic - old, white people. The Town should create a general Carbondale Facebook page. Also, the website is challenging to navigate and needs to be updated.

Trustee Silverstein stated that one of the Trustees' goals last year was to increase communication. He believes the Town should make the effort to translate more information into Spanish.

Fred Malo stated that every time he makes a suggestion on how to reduce the Town's carbon footprint he gets the same answer – it costs too much. Reversing climate change is going to cost way more than trying to prevent it. We need to reduce emissions by 2040.

Trustee Sparhawk replied that the Town tried to pass a Climate Action Tax in 2016 but it failed. She said it is worth thinking about bringing it up again because we do not have a pool of money to address climate change.

Frosty Merriott stated that the Board needs to pause and think about development. The increase in traffic is already where it would be if the new City Market was open. The EBoard wants to have a discussion on a moratorium on development on Highway 133. One thousand residential units are planned over the next two years. The EBoard is afraid we will lose our small-town character. We need to encourage electric cars, and expand the circulator bus. Everything is moving really fast.

Mayor Richardson asked what would be the goal of a moratorium? Frosty answered that the traffic is going to be worse than we thought. The moratorium would only apply to future development, not the developments that have already been approved.

Pat Hunter suggested the EBoard and the Trustees should meet again in three months. Trustee Henry stated that if we meet she wants substance and recommendations.

Summer stated that we should have a moratorium on all development until we have a vision – a road map - and there should be racial and social justice.

Trustee Sparhawk stated that she disagrees; a moratorium is not what we need. If we halt the affordable housing developments we have approved people will have to move down valley and commute to their up valley jobs. What does that do to the environment? Safe, affordable housing is social justice.

The entire Board agreed that they oppose a development moratorium.

Mayor Richardson stated that the scale and pace of development was thought through in the Comp Plan. To change the Comp Plan is to be short sighted. Trustee Bohmfalk stated that development comes in waves and unfortunately it can't be spread out

equally over time. Everybody hates traffic and people use transit when cars become inconvenient. Development will support diversity.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES – 2021 PRIORITIES

Identifying Board priorities serves as guidance for the budgeting process.

Discussion ensued and the Board agreed to the following 2021 goals:

- **Communication**

Solicit third party recommendations for comprehensive 2-way communication and community engagement

Continue to implement the Communication Plan

Consider “social inclusion and diversity” strategies which may include:
bi-lingual trustee meetings

Translate agendas, minutes, legal notices, etc. into Spanish and use other communication mechanisms geared to the Spanish speaking community

- **Rivers**

Consider improving river access and river health, including but not limited to, continued drought resiliency planning

- **Financial Resiliency**

Consider current level of financial resiliency and if not sufficient, consider alternative and/or additional strategies

- **Comprehensive Plan**

Consider whether 2021 is the time to begin updating the Comprehensive Plan, which could include asking stakeholder groups, such as boards and commissions, whether they feel the current Plan should be updated now or in later years. If so, why?

ADJOURNMENT

The August 18, 2020 joint work session adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

APPROVED AND ACCEPTED



Dan Richardson, Mayor

ATTEST:



Cathy Derby, Town Clerk

