TOWN OF BASALT
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
WORK SESSION
FEBRUARY 2, 2016

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m. Commissioners answering roll call were Dylan Johns, Eric Vozick, Gino Rossetti, and Alternate Tracy Bennett.

Staff present was Susan Philp, Town Planner; James Lindt, Assistant Planning Director; and Denise Tomaskovic, Recorder.

A list of people signing in for this meeting is available for review at Town Hall.

APPROVAL

Minutes of January 19, 2016

M/S VOZICK AND ROSSETTI TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JANUARY 19, 2016 AS READ. THE MOTION CARRIED BY A VOTE OF 4-0.

AGENDA ITEMS

Work Session – Zoning for the Our Town Planning Properties

Philp reminded everyone present that what has historically been referred to as the Clark's Market parcel is now being referred to as Basalt Center Circle (BCC).

Philp called Don Elliott who has been contracted to help write the zoning language for the Our Town Planning parcels. He did not answer so she left a message and moved along with the discussion.

Philp reviewed the Our Town Planning Core Values and Guiding Principles posted on the wall.

At this time Elliott returned the call. At Philp's request, he explained the differences between the primary zoning options; Community Serving Commercial (CSC) and River District Overlay. Elliott was of the opinion that the four parcels included in this sub area are unique, each having its own character and potential, and should be anchored by four unique uses.

The Commissioners discussed possible uses for the BCC parcel that could function as anchors. Some recommendations were a grocery store, hotel, arts center and town hall combination, and a place for youth to gather and socialize. It was noted that a sub-surface parking structure should be incorporated into whatever anchor feature is proposed. Elliott reminded the Commissioners that a sub-grade parking structure is very expensive to build and cannot rely on a non-profit organization to generate a substantial enough income to subsidize the parking structure. Therefore, a hotel or grocery store might be better anchor uses. An arts center, town hall or youth center could be supporting uses but shouldn't be considered anchor uses. The site is big enough to support a variety of uses.

The Town Hall parcel would be appropriate for the Art Base to capitalize upon for its home. There is room to expand operations, the lawn area is used by kids attending classes, and the parcel is already being used for civic functions as well as a summer farmers' market. It is considered a "bridge" between the river parcel and the rest of downtown. Elliott said that the Art Base could function as a magnet (instead of an anchor) that would support the nearby anchors. Elliott cautioned against considering housing as a magnet – housing functions as a feeder for the magnets and anchors.

The BCC and CDC parcels are large enough to accommodate multiple uses while the Town Hall and Merino Park parcels would not really lend themselves to multi-use functions. However, there could be residential uses on upper floors.

Commissioner Rossetti asked if all the parcels will be zoned at the same time and if they would have the same zoning. Elliott replied that there will be an over-riding theme in this district but the parcels will have different uses, dimensions, and focuses on walkability depending on where they are located. He thought that the CSC Zone District may have to be modified to look more like the River District. Rossetti then asked if it would be possible to include the park area in the CSC Zone District [as a park/recreation use] instead of zoning it as Public (P). Philp said that Staff could work on that idea with Elliott.

Elliott asked what the Commissioners thought about the Merino Park site, especially in the context of a CSC Zone District. Suggestions made by the Commissioners included multi-story residential use, mixed commercial and residential uses, structured parking, business incubator and non-profit uses. Elliott wondered what type of anchor would be good in this location, given its size limitations. Further discussion about anchor uses also included this area as a possible relocation site for Town Hall.

Moving on to the CDC site, a hotel was suggested as well as a beer garden/brewery that could overflow into the adjacent park/event space, creating some synergy. Another need in Basalt is a youth center and having a place like that adjacent to the river park would be a great fit. Whatever is placed on the east end of the parcel should be something that energizes the park while not adversely affecting downtown businesses. The parcel is big enough to accommodate multiple uses and residential use could be part of that equation. An open space, an activating edge, and some other use should be included on the CDC parcel. Elliott stated that open space doesn't require placement of a large activating space adjacent to it. In fact, a one acre activating space would be too large, i.e. ineffective as an activator.

Elliott said that he will draft some different versions of what could be included in the CSC Zone District for the P&Z Commissioners to review. Some themes of the CSC are applicable for all four parcels but there are some distinctions that can be made, also. In response to a question from Commissioner Rossetti, Elliott said that combining retail space with any type of housing can get tricky if it is part of a requirement. It's wise to permit or allow it, but it's not smart to *require* it.

Chair Johns brought up the possibility of having a grocery store downtown. Elliott asked if any feasibility studies have been conducted regarding grocery stores in downtown Basalt. Philp said that a previous business owner had a grocery store feasibility study performed and it indicated that a grocery store was an economically feasible use. Johns said that success of a grocery store would depend on how different it is from Whole Foods or City Market, and mentioned Trader Joe's as an example.

Regarding existing vacant retail in downtown Basalt, Elliott said that successful retail depends on adjacent energizing activity. Philp added that other than a stretch of Midland Avenue, there are many places where commercial use is only on one side of the street so that compounds the problem.

Elliott stated that the conversation has been helpful and this will be an iterative process in which he will articulate what he has heard and align that with the rest of the Code in a draft document. He suggested that the Commission not try to be too specific in prescribing uses and dimensions. He will work further to define the differences in character, density, and focus of each parcel. He didn't think that including an expedited process for the CSC Zone District was a good idea because the parcels are such important sites in the Town. The phone call with Don Elliott ended. The next item for discussion was to begin setting some of the dimensional requirements for the parcels.

Regarding the BCC property, the Commissioners agreed on allowing up to four stories with the third story set back from the street and the fourth story set back even further, located over the center of the parcel. Chair Johns added that the streetscape building height is very important, especially at the entrance to Town, in order to avoid overwhelming that entrance. There was discussion about whether or not providing square footage numbers would be beneficial. The Commissioners thought it more important that the Town ends up with a functional, successful and quality project rather than limiting structures to specific allowable square footage numbers. Parcel use and height limits will help determine the building's workable square footage and its configuration. One use that should be included on the BCC parcel is housing that is affordable and attractive for 20- to 30-year-old residents. Another BCC parcel use should be commercial activity fronting Two Rivers Road to mirror the height limits of the existing two- to three-story commercial buildings across the road [at Ute Center].

For the Lions Park parcel the Commissioners agreed on structures up to two stories.

Discussion about Merino Park revolved around allowing an at-grade parking structure with up to three stories above it as long as the top floor doesn't interfere with views from the residences on the hillside. Another suggested configuration could be residential units above commercial/business incubator uses. Staff noted that residential uses require off-street parking and this could work in conjunction with the incubator uses if parking for that was located elsewhere.

Alternate Bennett asked about Sandy Kucharzyk's previously submitted idea of re-routing Midland Spur. Couldn't that potentially reconfigure the Merino Park parcel? Philp replied that it could be taken into consideration as a future planning exercise. However, if the Art Base has the entire Lions Park property in the future, rerouting the road might not work with their vision, in addition to being a very expensive proposition.

Philp then listed the proposed uses for the Merino Park parcel: Town Hall, park, housing, and a business incubator. The Commissioners thought that providing incubator space at Merino Park could be compatible with RMI's mission and the upcoming River Center. This could become Basalt's "brand" which may also help to draw a younger demographic. Including Affordable Housing would be integral to this mix of uses. The Town owns both Lions Park and Merino Park so that is a plus in determining their future.

At Staff's invitation, Tim Belinski showed a map depicting the BCC parcels which the Commissioners reviewed. Philp said that she has spoken with the Aspenalt Hotel owners and they are interested in what could happen in that area. Belinski suggested that it might be advantageous to use a process like Aspen's COWOP process in working through development possibilities on BCC. Lindt explained how the COWOP process worked in Aspen as far as getting all the stakeholders more or less on the same page. Most of the property owners in the BCC area are not local. Philp added that the Town will create the zone district but it won't be applied until a development application comes in.

Chair Johns asked if that process would boil down to spot zoning at its finest. Wouldn't it be better to implement an overlay area? Philp replied that after the P&Z's conference call with Don Elliott a few weeks ago, the Commissioners had moved away from the idea of having an overlay area. However, it could be revisited if the Commission wanted to do so. Belinski went on to explain that the idea in a multiple property owner situation (such as the BCC area) is to make sure the commonly held elements continue to provide equal benefits for all the property owners, even if significant changes occur in a different part of the property.

Philp added that in her conversations with the Prinster family they've indicated that they understand the BCC parcel will be redeveloped. Philp said that the BCC subdivision was created before PUDs had become the norm in Basalt. Belinski added that it also predates Colorado Common Ownership laws. As one of its uses, this parcel is the most likely location for a structured parking facility and it's a matter of figuring out the legalities to make this happen.

Philp pointed out that the P&Z's purpose is to create the framework for the CSC Zone District, but the properties won't actually be rezoned until development applications for these parcels are received. The BCC parcel will require more of a planning process than the other parcels.

Commissioner Rossetti said that there needs to be a complete picture; the public is as interested in knowing what uses are being considered for the properties as they are in what the zoning language entails.

Chair Johns summarized that the P&Z is framing the CSC Zone District as being more of a volumetric zoning model than a floor area specific model. Clarification will be included that states two and a half stories are allowed on the CDC parcel, one to two stories on Lions Park, three to four stories on Merino Park, and three to four stories on the BCC parcel. The P&Z is looking for feedback from the Council on these ideas. Philp said that the Commission should be prepared to hear that the Town Council will want to assign a square footage limitation on the CDC parcel.

Alternate Bennett asked for clarification about the difference between small and large retail uses. The Commissioners thought that having large retail use on the CDC parcel should be removed from the list; along with the movie theatre and performing arts uses on that parcel. Also, Staff will continue to work with Elliott on refining the Acceptable Uses List.

ADJOURNMENT
M/S ROSSETTI AND VOZICK TO ADJOURN. THE MOTION CARRIED BY A VOTE OF 4-0.

The Planning and Zoning Commission adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

TOWN OF BASALT
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

By: _____
Dylan Johns, Co-Chair

Attest: Denise Tomaskovic
Denise Tomaskovic, Recorder

P&Z February 2, 2016 Work Session (cont. P&Z discussion following Clarion Conference Call)

Takeaways from Zoning Discussion

Maximum Floor Area – Diagram of Building Footprint

- Inform Council that P&Z does not want to have a maximum floor area or FAR for the CDC, or other Our Town Parcels.
- Also the P&Z does not want to include a diagram in the Zoning District regulations that shows the building footprints on the 4 properties
- There are too many unknowns and the P&Z does not want to preclude an application arbitrarily which includes slightly more square footage.

Maximum number of stories

- BCC parcel: 4 stories in the interior of the site
  3 stories bordering Two Rivers Rd where 3 stories are opposing it on the other side of the street
  2 ½ *stories other areas bordering Two Rivers Rd or generally matching building height across the street which lowers near the Frying Pan River
- Lions Park: 1 or 2 stories
- Merino Park: (3 or 4 stories against the Hill including any story used for parking)
- CDC Building Parcel: 2 ½ stories

Other comments on uses

- Grocery store and small retail are desired. Not big box
- How do we get back to the vision of "Basalt Community Campus" non-profit uses, educational facilities
- Additional Public Parking is necessary to support the downtown area

* 2 ½ stories means that the third story is pulled back from the façade so that a canyon-like feeling is avoided and the building appears at the street level to be a 2 story building