

**TOWN OF BASALT
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
WORK SESSION
FEBRUARY 16, 2016**

The work session began at 6:05 p.m. Commissioners present were Patrick McAllister, Gary Wheeler, Gino Rossetti, and Alternate Tracy Bennett.

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

Cathy Click and Patrice Becker were present, representing the different petitioner groups.

Work Session – Zoning for the Our Town Planning Properties

A model of the former Pan and Fork parcel and some adjacent areas was delivered to the Town Hall earlier today. Philp noted that there are some exchangeable pieces to depict the different build-out options being considered.

Philp said that one of the modeling options shows 55,000 sq. feet on the CDC parcel with a 2.5 story (two stories with third story setback) hotel. The other option is a representation of what the petitioners are looking for. She explained the different components of the model. While Lowe Enterprises hasn't signed off on what this model shows, it is generally indicative of their latest idea which includes office space of 15,000 sq. ft. and about 40,000 sq. ft. with condominium hotel/restaurant/affordable housing uses. In response to a question from Commissioner Rossetti, Philp said that Lowe Enterprises has indicated that they can have a viable development at 55,000 sq. ft. Rossetti added that he thinks the area closest to the intersection should be hardscaped with an inviting transition to the park areas.

Philp noted that the polygon and park areas are flat, but she will ask the model builder to add a 3-D structure in the polygon area to represent the pavilion where a restaurant/public restrooms could be located. Both P&Z and POST think that the polygon area should have an active use.

The model options were switched out and Click explained the concept behind the citizen group's ideas for up to 44,000 sq. ft. of development. The group wanted to show what a 22,000 sq. ft. building footprint (two stories) on one acre of land would look like. In this scenario there would be no hotel on the CDC parcel but there could be a year-round greenhouse/community event/restaurant space, a non-profit organization office and affordable housing. Click stated that the citizen group is looking for 1.3 acres of park, one acre for the building envelope, and no structure in the Big V.

Commissioner Rossetti said he thought the model piece representing 55,000 sq. ft. had a lot of interesting potential, whereas the citizen group's idea just looks like a couple of buildings. He thinks whatever is built on the CDC parcel should make a statement.

In response to a question from Commissioner McAllister, Click replied that a hotel adjacent to a park is an incompatible use because noise and activities in the park could have a negative impact on the hotel's guests. The same thing would be true if the hotel were replaced with private residences. The public would be ultimately impacted because the park could seem like a privatized extension of a hotel. Philp, using the Limelight Hotel and Wagner Park in Aspen as an example, pointed out that having a street between the two makes it seem like park activities don't impact the hotel, and vice versa.

Commissioner Rossetti and Alternate Bennett disagreed with Click on the effectiveness of a hotel on the CDC parcel as a revitalizing factor. Click felt that the better location for a hotel would be in the BCC. She said that the owners of the Aspenalt Hotel feel slighted by all the talk about needing another hotel in Basalt. They are consistently full and have many repeat customers. Rossetti and Bennett said that a hotel on the CDC parcel would draw a different demographic group [than the Aspenalt] and be close enough for the guests to walk around town, eating at the restaurants and shopping at the stores.

Click, noting that the park hasn't been completed yet, asked who will pay for its creation. Scanlon said that a tax increase seems to be in the future. Click suggested that if the Town owned the envisioned event center it could collect use fees. Staff is working with its financial advisor to determine the actual value of the property under various configurations. After further discussion about some tweaks to the model, Philp said that Staff will ask the model maker to build a more accurate representation of the petitioner group's ideas about the square footage being proposed.

Becker liked the idea of having a hotel in the BCC area. It looks less crowded there than on the CDC parcel.

Commissioner McAllister said he thought the model was helpful. He asked Click if her comments represented the thinking of the petitioner group. Click replied that the petitioner group was more concerned about getting the proposal on the ballot, not what the buildings are supposed to look like. The petitioner group people feel that more park is better.

Commissioner Wheeler said that the most common question he gets asked is how we're going to pay for the park. His response to them was that we're going to need to raise taxes, but not sales tax.

Becker said that if the taxpayers knew what they were getting into it would help in making the decision.

Commissioner Wheeler said it will be helpful for the public to have the model as a reference. Most people can't visualize square footages.

ADJOURNMENT

The Planning and Zoning Commission adjourned at 6:40 p.m.