

Notes of the Comprehensive Plan Meeting held Monday, November 30, 2009 at
6:00 p.m. at Lava City Hall, 115 West Elm, Lava Hot Springs, Idaho

Present: Susan Lorenz (SICOG), Rita Anderson, Mark Lowe, Randy Benglan,
Mike Vice, Cathy Sher, Vicky Lyon, and Trish Avery

Guests: Cheryl Hansen, Jim Mende, Steve Jones, Pam Slaughter, Ricky Frandsen,
and Emily Frandsen

Guest speakers presented information to the committee.

Cheryl Hansen: Architecture

- Lava Hot Springs is not hemmed in, it can expand into county as needed through annexation.
- Consistent signage is needed throughout the city.
- Open space is the buffer around the town, parks and greenways along river. If you try to have open space within, the city will become a sprawl. Density in development is needed to allow for open space in specific areas in the city (parks, greenways, etc.)
- Some corner lots are too small to build on but maybe small cottages or little houses could be built there if the zoning ordinance setbacks were relaxed.
- Preserve character of downtown by restricting buildings to 3 stories tall.
- Fill in empty places with new businesses. Try to attract business that would work year round. Zone for light industrial/manufacturing.
- Expand tourism into winter use.

Top items that need to be addressed:

1. Geographic boundaries – can we expand – where – put something in place for direction. Density of development supports open space in planned areas, i.e. parks
2. Transportation - Maintain street parking but look at alley as a secondary main street to keep traffic slow – could limit time parking is allowed on the street – walking in the downtown - no one way streets – don't speed up traffic - develop the river walk and develop access to river to serve the slow traffic and encourage people to be where we want them – trolley for people in the summer or when needed.
3. Attract families - Figure out how to attract families so the school doesn't close – they need to be able to work here - attract business that would work year round. Survey – what is full and what is not full (Santa Monica California – they have controlled rent so people can live there)
4. Walkable city - A walkable city means you can walk where you want to go in 10 to 15 minutes. A disjointed business district restricts housing purchases because

not an appearance of walkability. Continuous shops over hill will draw the walkers over the hill. Need a little city center wherever people are living.

Jim Mende: Fish and Game

- Pocatello is creating an open space document that might help us – smart growth was mentioned
- Planning responses to wildlife: integration into communities is no longer promoted. Large game animals don't do well in urban development and they attract predators. Need to find a way to separate wildlife from the community – partition them away from humans. Small mammals (squirrel, etc.) and birds that perch can be encouraged. **DO NOT FEED THE ANIMALS.**
- Water – potential is there for fishing in the summer – families used to come to Lava; guy fishes while the rest of the family enjoys the hot pools and shops. Develop shading on river for the fish to improve the fishery.
- Wildlife corridor not needed but should try to keep the deer on one side of the highway or the other. Deer are habituated to what the mothers teach. Deer have site fidelity. Don't encourage them to live in the city. Elk will move out if things change.

Jim offered his help as we move along with planning for open space and green space design. He left a "Living with Wildlife" booklet about what to plant to not attract.

Steve Jones – Housing Possibilities for Lava

- Addressing vacant property in respect to housing. Realtors sell the virtues of the property in Lava. He gave a handout with data gathered.
- Things that influence housing in Lava
 1. 19 homes lost to vacation rentals
 2. 1.26% new homes are built per year in Lava for the last 26 years
 3. Over last 15 years school went from 143 to 73 students enrolled.

Mr. Jones compared Inkom to Lava:

- Inkom is getting more students, 25 new students this year.
- Inkom has a new development area. \$30,000 building lot and in Lava a building lot is \$45,000
- There is very little residential building lots to buy in Lava that have access to services. New development would require the developer to install infrastructure.

Mr. Jones showed the committee maps of vacant lots in the city of Lava.

- Only 3 building sites are for sale in the residential zone
- 33 build sites in R2 that are vacant ground with access to city infrastructure, but it is not for sale
- 6 building sites in R-3 that are vacant ground with access to city infrastructure, but not for sale
- There are a lot of unimproved plotted lots with no utility access- The cost the lots and to install infrastructure makes developing these areas cost prohibitive.

Mr. Jones stated that Lava can't grow because the ground costs too much to put these structures on it. If three homes were allowed on each building site, the math will work. Unless homes become affordable for the average wage earning family, the student population at Lava Elementary will continue to decline until the school is closed.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Lava Hot Springs Comprehensive Plan Committee will be held December 14, 2009 at 6:00 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.