



**Blueprint Downtown Steering Committee Meeting Agenda
Downtown Juneau Fire Hall Meeting Room**

June 6, 2019, 6:00 p.m.

Steering Committee Members Present:

Betsy Brenneman (in at 6:45 pm)
Kirby Day
Daniel Glidmann
Lily Otsea
Michael Heumann

Wayne Jensen
Laura Martinson
Patty Ware
Nathaniel Dye

Steering Committee Members Absent:

Ricardo Worl
Karena Perry, Vice Chair
Christine Woll, Chair

Meilani Schijvens
Jill Ramiel

Staff:

Beth McKibben, Senior Planner, Project Manager
Tim Felstead, Planner, Assistant Project Manager
Alexandra Pierce, CDD Planning Manager
Marjorie Hamburger, CDD Admin

Assembly Members:

Loren Jones

I. Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 pm.

II. Approval of Minutes

a. May 16, 2019, DRAFT minutes, Blueprint Downtown Steering Committee Meeting

Ms. Ware said that she was not familiar with the reference on Page 2 to the Upstairs Downtown project and asked for that explanation to be included in the minutes.

MOTION: *By Mr. Glidmann to approve the May 16, 2019, minutes with the explanation of Upstairs Downtown added on Page 2. Mr. Day seconded.*

The motion passed with no objection.

III. Public Participation - none

IV. Review Revised Table of Contents and Chapter Order

Table of Contents

Ms. McKibben showed a revised Table of Contents looking for approval or suggestions for more changes. She noted that the Chapter 4 title was changed as a result of the previous meeting's discussion and the district heating subheading was taken out. Ms. Martinson clarified that the committee just wanted to change the wording of that subheading so as to not be specific to a particular project or business, however the topic should still remain in that chapter.

Mr. Felstead recalled that Chapter 5 should have "waterfront" added as a neighborhood/district category.

Ms. McKibben said there was an appendix needed for the visioning report so she added it to the list. Ms. Ware confirmed that Chapter 9 was removed. Yes, it was incorporated into Chapter 8, said Ms. McKibben.

Ms. McKibben noted that more adjustments can be made as the work progresses.

Order of Chapters

Ms. McKibben presented a suggested order for review of the chapters and said that staff proposed this order in anticipation of when information will be available to help the committee do the work. Mr. Day said he felt it would be great to have a list in front of committee members with these dates and topics. Ms. Ware questioned whether Chapters 5 and 6 might want to swap order since Chapter 6 includes the topic of capacity. She said she anticipates this topic being contentious for the community and the committee might want more time for public input. Ms. McKibben said staff put housing towards the end because of the need to complete the Upstairs Downtown and Downtown Zoning projects. Ms. Pierce said she hopes these two projects will be completed by November 2019.

Ms. McKibben said that the goal is to bring each chapter draft before the committee, work through it and reach consensus, then approve the draft and add it to the draft document. It likely will occur that some chapters will take longer to work through than others or will be more dependent on other chapters in order to finalize.

Ms. Martinson said that many stakeholders for Chapter 6 are not likely to be in town after the summer season to offer input, and she suggested an opportunity for public comment to happen in August or September. Ms. McKibben said it was very possible to get this input before the draft chapter is brought to the committee. In addition, after the committee is done with all the chapters there will be a public review of the draft document. Ms. Martinson said this satisfied her concern.

Ms. Ware said that she was okay with the order of chapters as presented, knowing that there is a lot of room for flexibility as the process moves along.

Ms. McKibben said that after the committee has worked through all the chapters, the whole document will go out for public review. The public comments will then come back to the

committee who will decide if further changes/edits are needed. It is unclear at this point how long this process will take.

V. Steering Committee Updates

a. Meeting Venue

Ms. McKibben said that the committee had concerns about having enough space for members of public to attend Steering Committee meetings. Staff investigated two other options – Harborview Elementary School and Assembly Chambers (the high school is not as available for meetings during the summer months).

Mr. Day noted that the DOT project on Egan Drive is a factor for travel into downtown this summer. Mr. Glidmann said he preferred Chambers as the location and parking can happen at Front & Main Streets. Ms. McKibben said she prefers keeping the meeting space consistent to avoid confusion for the public and committee members.

MOTION: *By Mr. Day to relocate meetings to Assembly Chambers.*

The motion passed with no objection.

Note: The second meeting in August will happen on August 28 instead of 29, due to the Chambers location already booked for another meeting on August 29.

b. Youth Participation

Ms. McKibben stated that the committee's youth representative is a voting member of committee but there are challenges for students making every meeting and committing to participation for the whole process that are different from the adult members. For example, Ms. Otsea (youth representative) just graduated from high school and is unlikely to be able to participate on the committee beyond September. Ms. McKibben wanted to discuss what the committee is looking for in a youth representative.

Ms. Otsea said that the hard thing for a student is that her schedule changes a lot; is not very much in her control due to school, participation in sports or activities, summer work, etc.; and she often does not have much advance notice of her schedule. She has been an active member of the Juneau Douglas High School (JDHS) student council and is aware that there are others on the council who are interested in the downtown planning project. She suggested that perhaps a small committee within the Student Council could be established which would meeting outside of the Steering Committee dates, and a representative from this committee could attend Steering Committee meetings to share the student committee's perspectives and/or take topics back for discussion and comment. Ms. Otsea said it might also be better to have a broad student view versus just one person's thoughts.

Mr. Glidmann said he liked this idea but felt the issue was the student representative being a voting member if the representative present at meetings was representing an outside committee. Mr. Dye reminded the committee that the Planning Commission has to vote to appoint any new members.

Ms. Ware asked Ms. Otsea if she felt a student committee should include both JDHS and Thunder Mountain High School (TMHS) students, or at least should the question be asked of each school. Yes, said Ms. Otsea. Perhaps a committee could be spearheaded by the JDHS student council, but she noted that there are downtown residents who attend TMHS. She would suggest being careful to not prefer one school's opinions to another.

Mr. Heumann said it felt important to him that just one person is the youth representative, although he liked the idea of this representative gathering more input from a school committee. Ms. Martinson said that adults are also very busy. She is aware that the student council has a site council representative who goes to every site council meeting, and she thought that similarly there could be a student who could make the commitment to regularly attend the Blueprint meetings. Ms. Otsea said that coming into this project, she had no idea what the schedule would be but now that it is known, it could be easier for a student to make that commitment. Ms. Martinson suggested someone could be appointed to be the Steering Committee representative through the JDHS student council. Ms. Pierce pointed out that since this project will last beyond the next school year, a senior might also have the same issue as Ms. Otsea so perhaps the Planning Commission could appoint a student council position, rather than a specific person.

Ms. McKibben noted that this area plan steering committee is the first to have a youth representative as a voting member so there is no precedent. She plans to have something to bring to the Planning Commission to vote on. She said to remember that the youth representative does not necessarily have to be a high school student; the position could be filled by someone slightly older who is still considered as a "youth".

Mr. Day said the committee should start the ball rolling now on this topic. Ms. Ware said there would be a month after school starts for Ms. Otsea to be in contact with the student council or other youths and help with transition to a new representative.

VI. Draft Overall Vision Statement

Ms. McKibben shared written comments from Ms. Woll. Ms. Woll suggested changing "providing year round sustainable opportunities for investment and growth, diverse housing, enhanced mobility, arts and culture and continuation as the Capital City" to "providing opportunities for sustainable growth, diverse housing, enhanced mobility ..." Mr. Jensen asked what "sustainable growth" meant.

Mr. Glidmann said he would like to see the vision statement written in the present tense – "Downtown Juneau IS a vibrant ... its unique heritage and history PROVIDE opportunities ...

diverse housing culture DEFINES the Capital City”. Mr. Glidmann said he would like to have a statement of what Juneau is now with the aspiration of only getting better. As the statement currently stands, it sounds like things are not going well in our city.

Mr. Heumann said he hated to nit-pick, but his response to the statement that Juneau “will be safe” is that in reality Juneau is already really safe compared to most cities.

Mr. Day asked if the statement was meant to be a vision or a mission statement. Ms. McKibben said it should be a vision for the entire planning document. The concepts came from the nine themes of the visioning document created by the consultants. It has been drafted to state what Juneau is as well what the city aspires to become. Mr. Heumann asked if it is more a vision for the plan document or more about downtown.

Ms. McKibben said that an area plan is a statement of what Juneau wants to become. There are nine focus areas identified in the visioning document, and it is up to the committee to determine what actions are needed to get to where the community aspires to be. Decision makers such as the Planning Commission and the CBJ Assembly will use the final document. The overall vision statement should be aspirational and could also include guiding principles. Ms. McKibben did not find any vision statements in her review of other downtown plans already in place.

Ms. Pierce said a vision statement is a helpful touch point for the committee to have as a short and easy-to-react-to statement for consistency’s sake – does an idea or suggestion fit this vision? In addition, it can be helpful when reviewing proposals in the future that seem to be in “left field” but might or might not satisfy the vision. A vision statement is like a compass point, she said. Mr. Felstead said that once this statement is finalized, a copy will be posted at every meeting as a reminder and an inspiration.

Ms. Ware suggested moving part of the last line to the first line; “... is a vibrant, safe, and accessible place to live”. Mr. Dye add that specificity is not a bad thing but this statement is mostly broad.

Mr. Jensen said he liked the suggestion of shorter sentences. In addition, he suggested the following wording: “Downtown Juneau, a vibrant, safe, accessible place to live ...” Mr. Glidmann reiterated that if the plan document is looked at by future investors, etc., it will be important to emphasize the power of positive thinking. Juneau is all of these things now, and the goal is to strengthen these attributes. Mr. Day said perhaps the language should challenge people by stating more as action items, i.e. “ensure that downtown Juneau continues to be” Ms. McKibben felt that this type of wording could live in the guiding principles.

Ms. Ware felt that “welcoming and appealing” are redundant terms. If Juneau is appealing, isn’t it welcoming? Mr. Glidmann said to him the word “welcoming” directs attention to tourism. Ms. Martinson said she feels that Juneau is appealing but not always welcoming, and she sees these words as different from one another. Mr. Glidmann said that “welcoming” is challenging.

Juneau is appealing even if no one lives here. However, being welcoming requires the community to do something. Mr. Glidmann said that the community is in discussion about potentially 1.6 million visitors. Mr. Heumann pointed out the need to think also about residents of the Valley and other non-tourists who need to be welcomed to downtown. Mr. Day said that “welcoming” does not always mean “we welcome you” but can refer to infrastructure, housing, etc.

Mr. Felstead said he wanted to clarify “sustainable” and wondered if the term should appear in front of “growth”. Mr. Jensen asked how this fit. Mr. Glidmann suggested “sustainable growth”. Ms. McKibben said the word means multiple things – environment, economic stability, etc. Ms. Pierce said the term could live in some guiding principles, as an alternative.

Ms. McKibben said staff would work more on the statement and bring it back to the next meeting. Mr. Jensen reminded all that this is a vision for downtown Juneau, not the whole borough.

Mr. Day asked if economic viability was captured in the wording. “Opportunities for investment and growth” refer to money, said Mr. Glidmann. Mr. Heumann said he would love to work the concept of innovation into the statement. He said he looks at other port cities and sees interesting things that are not happening in Juneau, but could be. Is the reason why not due to burdensome practices, he wonders. Nevertheless, he would want to support off-the-wall ideas. Ms. Brenneman suggested the wording “appealing to residents, visitors, innovators and investors”. Mr. Dye challenged Steering Committee members to think of oddball scenarios like the AJ mine and see how that fits with the vision statement. Game it through to find the holes, he said.

Cumulative Draft:

Downtown Juneau is a vibrant, safe, and accessible place to live, work, play and explore. Welcoming and appealing to residents, visitors, innovators, and investors, its unique heritage and history, access to natural beauty, and urban amenities provide opportunities for investment and sustainable growth. Diverse housing, arts, and culture defines the Capital City.

VII. Draft Sub-District Boundaries

Ms. McKibben clarified that the Highlands boundary includes Norway Point. Mr. Glidmann pointed out that there is a house in the Highlands with 40 goats and a barn at 1410 Glacier Highway. This is an example of how varied the land use is in the Highlands.

The Harbors subarea includes both of the downtown harbors. Egan Drive is the boundary between the Highlands and the Harbors. Ms. McKibben said that the committee has not settled on calling these areas neighborhoods or districts.

The Flats is the original Casey-Shattuck subdivision. The Willoughby area follows what is described in the Willoughby plan. Chicken Ridge and Starr Hill are combined in this draft map.

The Downtown District includes Telephone Hill and USS 7A and is mostly mixed-use zoning. The Rock Dump is the only industrially zoned area downtown. The Waterfront area is evident, she said.

Mr. Felstead said that these neighborhoods in the context of the plan indicate where impacts may be different. The goal is to try to compartmentalize a big and diverse area. Mr. Dye said he was interested in differentiating between residential and commercial districts. With this in mind, he would extend the waterfront partly into the Rock Dump area because of tourism. He would also include the Glacier Highway part of the Flats with the Willoughby area because of the commercial activity along that street front. Mr. Felstead said that zoning-wise, the light commercial designation does apply to parts of the Flats.

Mr. Heumann asked about the importance of these boundaries. Ms. McKibben said that in the Table of Contents and the Land Use Chapter these districts/neighborhoods would be talked about in terms of sub-areas. The committee might make recommendations to zoning in some areas or placemaking recommendations might be relevant to a specific sub-area. Mr. Dye said that what is good for one area might not be good for another and so the committee will need to figure out how to diversify the plan. Ms. Pierce said this map was just a starting place for discussion. For example the discussion of the waterfront made her realize that there are uses in the Rock Dump waterfront area that are different from some tourist areas, which are also different from the harbors where locals keep their boats.

Ms. Martinson liked the adjustment made into the Rock Dump. Mr. Dye said it is good to remember that this is an aspirational plan. If the community wants the seawalk to end at the Rock Dump, there may need to be some changes to the industrial zoning.

Mr. Jensen said that he also could see that the Glacier Avenue corridor has commercial activity similar to the Willoughby area. The Flats used to be classified as a RO, "residential office zone", when he built his office there. Mr. Glidmann asked if there was a proposed idea for a harbor to be located on the south side of the Rock Dump. Ms. McKibben said she needed to refresh her memory concerning the waterfront plan.

Mr. Jones gave the committee some information about the status of plans for the Rock Dump. Mr. Felstead said that the whole strip along the front of the Rock Dump is waterfront commercial. Mr. Day asked if the seawalk were extended to the AJ dock, would that trigger a rezone. No, said Mr. Felstead. Ms. Pierce said that if there were a rezone, it would encourage the area around the AJ dock to develop in a public-use, friendly way. Mr. Day said he was talking about a sliver of land along the dock. Would the development of the seawalk be pushed along by rezoning this land, he asked?

Mr. Dye pointed out that this plan by itself will not rezone anything and there is a lack of industrial-use land in Juneau. The map will help define what is envisioned, and while it might not change anything, it might lend a voice to the idea of having a publically accessible waterfront.

The white area above the upper regions of this map indicate undeveloped land. It is all zoned "Rural Reserve", which is kind of a holding zone, said Ms. McKibben.

Mr. Glidmann said he recently learned something from an appraiser about the Aurora Arms condominiums, which are not financeable because they are non-conforming. The city is trying to do a land swap to provide a parking lot behind the building. Ms. Pierce said that CDD is working on a non-conforming ordinance to alleviate this situation.

Ms. Brenneman said that the Federal Building would be included in the area she drew on the map. Mr. Dye said he was following the Alternative Development Overlay District boundary line for his drawing, residential versus commercial. Ms. Brenneman said she was concerned about housing. Ms. McKibben pointed out that the red line on the map is the downtown parking district, which is an overlay district that allows for reduced parking requirements. Ms. Martinson asked to put on the "parking lot" for the future a discussion about having different parking permits for people who work downtown.

Ms. McKibben said that staff would mess around with the map and bring it back to the committee. She said she heard that the Willoughby District should grow to include the commercial area in the Flats and that part of the Rock Dump should be labeled as waterfront. Mr. Day asked if that area was not included as waterfront, could the seawalk still be developed there. Ms. Martinson asked if retail businesses and restaurants could be developed along the seawalk in that industrial area. Mr. Dye said he wanted to reverse the question to ask what the committee members think SHOULD be there. Ms. Pierce suggested not thinking of zoning but think about the vision for the Rock dump area. Ms. Brenneman wondered if the Rock Dump could be more attractive on the waterside. When people enter Juneau on a ship they first see a treatment plant, which she feels is a pretty grim view. It would be preferred if the whole periphery was waterfront. Mr. Glidmann said he also had the same interest along the road. Ms. Martinson agreed. The vision, they said, could be a walking strip, park, sitting space, little kiosks, something vibrant. Ms. McKibben said that even if it is called the Rock Dump, the committee might recommend that the area might grow away from industrial.

Mr. Glidmann said that in terms of labeling, the map looked pretty good. Mr. Heumann pointed out that along Glacier Avenue opposite the high school there are also some businesses, a hotel, a doctor office. Ms. McKibben said that there was no one right answer but the committee will have to use what is agreed upon moving forward.

Mr. Jensen wanted to comment concerning the Rock Dump and pointed out that historically Juneau has always had a working waterfront. From the perspective of how the community will grow, the city needs industrial area along the water and this cannot be located north of the bridge. In his opinion, he would not want to make the Rock Dump into a park. Ms. Brenneman said she was not talking about developing the whole area as a park but was talking about a mixed vision. She has experience with other towns where the harbor area has restaurants mixed in with commercial docks, however in Juneau's downtown harbors there is only the Yacht Club right now. This is another area with more potential, she felt.

Ms. Pierce said that these are great discussion points for what the committee wants to see when the group gets to these areas. It is important to have the plan discuss how businesses, schools, and residences interact. The map being worked on just breaks downtown into smaller sub-groups because downtown Juneau is not a cohesive place. Mr. Dye said he wanted to put forward a very different idea to delineate the downtown areas as “primary residential use”, “primary commercial”, and “primary waterfront”, with blurry lines in between.

Ms. Brenneman asked about the white colored areas on the map where the pink downtown district ended and the upland areas and the Rock Dump began. She wondered why the downtown district did not extend into this section. Ms. McKibben said she thought the white areas needed to be incorporated into other areas, and she will refine the map based on this conversation and then bring it back to the committee.

Mr. Glidmann said that people coming to visit Juneau are very interested in the history of the gold mines. He suggested calling the area a “mining neighborhood or district” in the vision so down the road resources can be put in place to develop in this way because it is a major historical landmark. He said he felt that Juneau is burying its mining history right now.

VIII. Public Participation - none

IX. Committee Comments

Mr. Day had a further comment concerning the high school/youth representative discussion. JDHS and Yaakoosge Daakahidi Alternative High School are within downtown boundary lines. He said he felt that Ms. Otsea would be good resource to help find people from those schools who might get involved.

Ms. McKibben asked if the group ready for a draft of Chapter 1, and committee members responded that they were. She will prepare the draft for the next meeting.

Ms. Ware asked when to expect the data from the visioning report.

Mr. Dye requested that the meeting materials be bundled into one pdf packet when sent via email.

X. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:37 pm.

Next Meeting Date: June 27, 2019, 6 p.m., at downtown Fire Hall (last time).