

Planning Commission
Auke Bay Implementation Ad Hoc Committee

Tuesday, December 20, 2018, 12:00 PM

Marine View Building, 4th Floor

Call to order 12:04 pm.

I. Roll Call

Planning Commission:

Dan Miller (Chair)

Paul Voelckers

Dan Hickok

Nathaniel Dye

Staff:

Jill Maclean, Director, CDD

Allison Eddins, Planner II, CDD

Chelsea Wallace, Administrative Assistant, CDD

Assembly Members:

Michelle Hale

II. Approval of Agenda

Hearing no objection the agenda was approved.

III. Approval of Minutes

A. November 6, 2018 Draft Minutes

MOTION: by Mr. Voelckers to approve the minutes with no edits.

The motion passed with no objection.

IV. Agenda Topics

I. Recap of December 6, 2018 Public Meeting

Ms. Eddins wanted to review everything that was discussed at the public meeting on December 6, 2018 with the Commissioners, to see how they felt about the meeting, discuss the public comments received thus far, and try to determine how to move forward. One of the most-heard comments from the public is that staff did not do the best they could have in notifying the public on the development of the plan. However, the boundary map and mailing lists for notices have been reviewed and those who did not receive notices were on the list, so it is unclear as to why they did not receive their notice.

Mr. Voelckers asked for more information on what happened and what was discussed at the meeting on December 6th.

Ms. Eddins stated that an estimated 100 people attended the meeting, including CDD Planners Beth McKibben and Teri Camery. Auke Bay has a lot of citizens involved and engaged in the public process and the department finds that to be a great help. Ms. Eddins then gave a brief overview of the presentation she gave at the meeting.

Mr. Voelckers asked about how the public process was structured at the meeting and if time was given for questions, or if she would stop as questions arose.

Ms. Eddins stated that the meeting was pretty organized, they were able to complete everything on time, and she took some questions during the presentation, but also gave time at the end for questions. The public had questions about the density proposals. Some residents showed concerns regarding the zoning and how it will impact their quiet life in Auke Bay, increasing the density and the development of more infrastructure, utility capabilities, and right-of-way concerns. Some residents felt that what the developers would have to give did not balance well with the development allowance they would be given; the residents felt that the developers wouldn't have to give up much, but would be getting a lot in return.

Mr. Voelckers asked if it is felt that the residents think it's more developer-focused, rather than community-focused.

Ms. Eddins replied yes, it seems like the public feels this is more developer-focused. The department needs to work on effectively communicating the confusing areas of the plan. Moving forward, she felt that it would be better to put less emphasis on what the developers can do and more on what the community can do; she would like to further discuss what direction to go with everything. Ms. Eddins and the department want to develop a great plan, so having the public input is great, because it gives an idea of what way to move forward with development plans.

Ms. Maclean stated that Ms. Eddins was selling herself short. Ms. Maclean fully admits that the CDD may have dropped the ball when the Auke Bay Area Plan was adopted. The process of the area plan has been ongoing and it has been a new process and everyone is learning a lot coming out of it. A Steering Committee was assembled, but there were many fluctuations as some members couldn't continue to be on the committee. It was hard when new members joined, because the Committee would have to back track and get the new members up to date. Thankfully the Committee was able to continue as members were replaced and it is great to have so many involved, but there was a lack of continuity. There has been a lot of public outreach and the department is unsure as to who didn't get the notices and why, but personal experience has shown that it is easy to throw out the notices without even realizing what it is. The department should have hit the ground running when everything was moving forward well,

but unfortunately it didn't happen and momentum has been lost and opportunity has been missed. The Committee has been working since January, but things are getting more involved now. There is a whole new group working on this plan and it would be good to regroup. The department has been working on getting something together for the public to react to, as you can't just give them nothing, and we are trying to take the steps to get things done right. Now we can see where the plan stands with the community and we can all work together. The department plans to take a step back and have some small meetings with the neighborhood association for thorough discussion. The Auke Bay community does not want another "downtown" and the department does not want that either. There are hopes to develop something like a community-friendly village. It is necessary to look at what the current zoning is in Auke Bay and how close it is to downtown's zoning, so we can adjust accordingly to avoid having Auke Bay become another "downtown". The department is proposing a series of meetings with the Auke Bay neighborhood association and then having more, big meetings after that. These meetings would be used to break things down, looking at each piece of the plan and see how they all get us to the big picture. There may be some lag in meeting with the Planning Commission, but we have a better idea of what is needed now to bring everyone back together.

Mr. Voelckers felt that what Ms. Maclean shared made a lot of sense. He believes that some of the people who attend the meetings may actually be under the impression that they are bringing ideas on how to develop, but they are really only able to give their opinion. Mr. Voelckers asked how the department could include the public without hearing every single opinion and suggested a steering committee to help with this.

Mr. Dye asked if the intent of these meeting is to ask for the public's opinion or if it is to tell them what is being worked on and how we are moving forward and if there are plans to re-open the Auke Bay Area Plan.

Ms. Maclean stated that there is no intent to re-open the plan and being able to do so would take away from the actual plan and it would be hard to make any progress. It also seems there may be more misunderstanding in the rezoning, as it can be quite confusing if it's not something you are familiar with. There may just need to be more education on what the plan really is, what the vision is, what the community wants, and what the zoning actually gets you.

Mr. Voelckers felt that Ms. Maclean had a good response and believes this would allow for an informative meeting, but still work to capture the big picture.

Mr. Miller recapped that, essentially, the plan exists and has been adopted by the CBJ Assembly, but unfortunately here we are, four years later, trying to get the ball rolling again. Mr. Miller has been involved with this plan for quite a while and feels that it is a very important undertaking. He suggested considering having an Auke Bay Implementation Committee meeting before, or after, each neighborhood meeting, to help stay connected to the plan and

keep things moving forward. If the Committee meets after a neighborhood meeting, you could start the second meeting with a brief recap of the neighborhood meeting entailing what was discussed and how things are progressing. Mr. Miller asked if it made sense to have two or three members of the Auke Bay community join the Auke Bay Implementation Committee, so they could be able to attend meetings in a seat and partake the same as the Commissioners.

Mr. Hickok stated that he lives in Auke Bay and they have been receiving flyers from the CDD, along with notices from the Department of Transportation regarding their projects. He thought that it is possible that information from the CDD was missed, due to all the information that everyone was receiving. Mr. Hickok reiterated that this is a proposal and everyone is against having another downtown, especially regarding the parking situations.

Lisa Greenough – 1340 Fritz Cove Road

Ms. Greenough asked if public comments were okay.

Ms. Eddins stated that public comments could be given via email or written comment.

Ms. Greenough stated that the Committee and plan failed to point out concerns for parking, including handicap parking and adequate access for people with disabilities and elderly.

Mr. Miller stated that the plan did not intend to disregard parking and adequate access for people with disabilities or the elderly.

Ms. Greenough felt that planning to build to the Right-of-Way did not show regard for people with particular needs.

Mr. Miller reiterated that, that was not the intent. He thanked Ms. Greenough for her comments, but stated that the Committee is not taking public comments at this time.

Mr. Voelckers, bringing the discussion back to having members of the Auke Bay community seated on the Auke Bay Implementation Committee, asked about the burden raised for who would be the one to decide who would be seated with the Committee, who would be allowed to be a member, and who would get to have a say.

Mr. Miller stated that he didn't know the answer to that, but felt it is important to get the information back to the community and keep everyone involved.

Ms. Maclean stated that there has been a lot of outreach to the public to help keep everyone informed, including notices in the paper and on the website and she doesn't want to take away from the team that is putting in the extra work to make sure everyone is included. There has also been outreach via notices in the mail and advertisement on the radio; the information is being put out to the community. The meetings have been very well attended and the Steering

Committee has always had at least 12 members, but usually has closer to 20. The residents do have some ownership and have to take the time to see what is happening in their community, as well.

Ms. Eddins said that it is very important to the CDD and the Committee that they make sure people feel like they are being heard at the Auke Bay Neighborhood Meetings. They have been working to develop a timeline to potentially have Neighborhood Meetings every other month and have Subcommittee Meetings on the opposite months. This would give more time to have a lot of outreach to others, including AEL&P, UAS, DOT, and the CBJ Assessor's Office. Having extra time would make communicating all the information easier.

Mr. Dye said that the big take away from the public meeting was that they don't want to focus too hard on if the plan is correct and no one wants to throw the plan out, but if there isn't enough community support for it, they will be left continuing to push the rock up the hill. Mr. Dye expressed concerns about putting too much effort into rezoning the districts until the Committee has more people backing the project.

Mr. Miller stated that he whole-heartedly agrees that having the community's support is completely necessary, but having a full understanding of what the rezoning and all the information truly means is necessary. Then the people can stand behind that, if they choose to. But to start, the people need to understand what exactly is on the ground today and what exactly it all means.

Mr. Dye suggested that it may help to have aerial photos of Auke Bay to super impose what everything would look like, having each portion enlarged to show what it looks like now and what it could look like in the future.

Mr. Voelckers cautioned on affording hitting on each point specifically, because the project needs to move forward. It has been four years since the plan was started, and progress is being made, but not much. He felt that there needs to be more outreach and information given to the community, but it needs to be done at a faster rate. The public can still be informed and kept in the loop, but everything needs to keep moving forward.

Ms. Maclean stated that she felt meeting every other month may be too long and suggested that meeting every three weeks could work better for everyone and she and Ms. Eddins could work out their own meetings together. The community needs to come out and support the plan, if they want, but if the Committee and CDD keep moving forward and the Auke Bay community tells them that they don't like the plan or the ideas brought forward, then the Committee and CDD will stop the plan. The Douglas community is asking for development, so time and resources could go to them. Originally, the Auke Bay Plan had supporters and the Steering Committee was developed, so the community needs to come forward and show their support, or lack thereof. No one is looking to force the community to embrace something they

don't want. There can be more meetings, the public piece can be done quicker, and give the Committee and CDD a few months to get things together, or tell us that you don't support this and the Committee and CDD will step back.

Mr. Miller asked if every project would be brought to the Planning Commission for approval.

Ms. Maclean stated that no, not every project would go before the Planning Commission.

Ms. Eddins stated that it depended on the size of the project and what all it entailed.

Mr. Miller asked if the majority of projects may go before the Planning Commission.

Ms. Maclean stated that it was hard to say, as there are a lot of variables that have to be considered, including commercial vs. residential zoning.

Mr. Miller thought it possible that a lot of the public comments received were due to misunderstandings. Previously, everyone on the Steering Committee board was in favor of the proposed developments and there may be people in the Auke Bay community that are still in favor of the plan. He felt that it may be a matter of further educating the public on what is going to happen, with details on walkable areas, building to the Right-of-Way, parking in the rear of buildings, how building a grid structure is an incentive for the people who own the property and their land value to go up, attractable walking areas, plenty of parking, tiered view planes, and the bonus sections. There are a lot of good aspects to this plan and it just needs to be conveyed in the correct way. Mr. Miller liked the idea of moving the proposal along a faster rate, as a lot of thought has gone into this plan and a lot of ground has already been covered. He has hopes that it can move forward.

Mr. Voelckers agreed with Mr. Miller and liked the idea of having meetings every three weeks. Mr. Voelckers' general issue is that the Planning Commission and CDD are doing good work, but they are not connecting with the community at large. He discussed how the Alternative Residential Subdivision plan was passed, but not until there was a lot of contentious and unsettling testimony with people completely misunderstanding what was being proposed. There was a complex mix of personalities and institutional processes and he believes Auke Bay is an example of this, as well. There is potential for great development, but the information has not been conveyed where people feel empowered, but are scared of what is happening. The Committee and CDD are not getting the message out correctly and they will have to do better.

Mr. Dye agreed with Mr. Voelckers and felt that a lot of direction may have started with the Alternative Development Overlay District and opt in rule. Mr. Dye felt that it is important to understand the process of what is going on. For example, having parking in the rear of buildings, but the entrance is located in the front, is probably not going to work. The work is preliminary, but it still took a lot more time. Mr. Dye felt that the point of the public meetings is

to get feedback from the community and to make progress. It is helpful to hear problems, but it would be more helpful to hear solutions as well.

Ms. Eddins stated that the plan calls for on-street parking, so local streets that are platted would be worked on with the CBJ Streets Department and they could work on what the community says they would like to have. Sometimes these Committee meetings are very hard for people to attend.

Ms. Greenough interjected that over 100 people asked that the Committee meetings be held in Auke Bay.

Ms. Maclean stated that they appreciate the community wanting to be involved, but the Committee meetings are working sessions, so the Commissioners are coming in on their lunch breaks and working together. These Committee meetings are not open for public comment, but are open to the public. There are a lot of meetings and people have a lot going on in their lives outside of the Committee duties, so it's not easy, and the meetings are held at the CDD so they can be staffed accordingly. The meetings for the public are held in Auke Bay and there are other meetings held at UAS in the evening so more people can attend. In regards to the parking situation, take for example Squire's parking situation. They have parking in the rear of the building along with an easily accessible entrance. That is what this plan is trying to accomplish; more parking situations like that. The CDD is always striving to organize more public outreach, they have even started a Facebook page, and they want everyone to be involved. There is also the CBJ's Facebook page, radio advertisement, mailed public notices, the Department takes emails, and there are sign-up sheets for those who would like to be notified via email. A lot of information about the Alternative Residential Subdivision plan that was just passed was given to the public, but there is also an appeal going on and not much can be said about it due to the appeal. They had met with people, and everyone was in support of the plan, but then the people received other information and no longer supported it, but didn't discuss it with the Department. It is very important to communicate together.

Mr. Voelckers stated that having more information can help the Committee and CDD look at how to make things better and find new ways to make things progress. Unfortunately, people don't always understand what is happening, due to a lack of information, so the information needs to get out there in a better method. Mr. Voelckers thought that it would be possible to consider meeting at different locations, in order to make it easier for the people to come and see what is being proposed.

Mr. Dye asked if the required public notice for these Committee meetings is 24-hours' notice.

Ms. Maclean affirmed that 24-hours' notice is correct.

Mr. Dye asked if the Department does more notice than this and if they go above and beyond to notify everyone.

Ms. Maclean and Ms. Eddins stated that the Department does go above and beyond and notices go out well before the day before the meetings.

Mr. Dye suggested showing everyone the Novus program and where they can find agendas and minutes for the meetings.

Ms. Eddins said that could be done and would just need a computer.

Mr. Miller asked if the Commissioners and staff would like to schedule the next meeting at this time.

Ms. Maclean stated that she and Ms. Eddins would need to discuss times and determine a schedule for future meetings. They would also need to consider who the Chair of the Committee will be and what things will be like after the New Year with new Commissioners.

Mr. Hickok felt it would be useful to keep the rest of the group together since they have all been here and working together since the beginning of the plan.

Ms. Maclean agreed and thought one of the old Commissioners may become the Chair and it would be good to have another member assigned. More needs to be determined, so they can schedule the meetings accordingly.

Ms. Greenough stated that she felt the Committee should be discouraging structure like Squire's with parking in the back and sidewalk areas. Her father is elderly and disabled, so how is he supposed to get inside? She does not want more development like what is in Auke Bay now, she wants better development. Ms. Greenough stated that what the plan is proposing is not good enough and she wants better access to all things.

Mr. Miller thanked Ms. Greenough for her comments.

V. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:09pm.