

SOUTH DOUGLAS / WEST JUNEAU AREA PLAN  
Steering Committee Meeting  
Zoom Webinar Format  
Thursday, July 21, 2022

**MINUTES**

Steering Committee Members Present:

Carole Bookless      \_\_\_ Rebecca Embler       Liz Smith  
 Matt Catterson       Arnold Liebelt       Linda Snow  
\_\_\_ Frank Delaney       Robert Sewell       Joyce Vick  
  
 H. Erik Pederson, Planning Commission Liaison (non-voting)  
\_\_\_ Kamal Lindoff, Property Manager, Douglas Indian Association Liaison (non-voting)  
\_\_\_ Bernadine DeAris, Douglas Indian Association Liaison (non-voting)  
\_\_\_ Jim Becker, Docks & Harbors Liaison (non-voting)

Staff Members Present:

Beth McKibben, CDD Senior Planner       Scott Ciambor, CDD Planning Manager  
\_\_\_ Jill Maclean, CDD Director      \_\_\_ Dan Bleidorn, CBJ Lands Manager

**I. Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order at 5:02 P.M.

**II. Approval of Minutes**

**a. May 31, 2022 Draft Minutes, South Douglas / West Juneau Steering Committee Meeting**

The minutes were approved as corrected by consensus.

**III. Public Testimony on Agenda Items – 10 minutes**

None.

**IV. Public Testimony on Non-Agenda Items – 10 minutes**

None.

Bookless asked about increasing public notice and outreach. Staff explained all notice requirements had been met. CBJ has been without a public information officer so “extra” outreach was not happening.

Catterson asked if the public is able to subscribe to public notices. Staff will check.

## **V. Draft Elements with Goals**

McKibben reviewed the vision statement. The vision statement is the “touchstone” for the elements and all goals and recommended strategies/actions in the plan should connect and serve to implement the vision statement.

McKibben asked the committee to keep the following questions in mind as they review the draft goals.

- Do the elements capture the ideals presented in the vision statement?
- Are there any gaps?
- As the initial filter for the plan, do the goal statements make sense to the committee? Is it understandable?
- Duplicative?
- Too Long?

She then asked committee members to provide their initial impressions. Then the discussion could move into more detail. Discussion with the Connected Community Element and draft goals.

Bookless noted “connecting people, places and nature”. She does not think connections to nature is covered. She would like to replace the word “robust”, eliminate “greater” from connection to the waterfront.

L. Smith said her initial impression is good. She believes connection to nature is covered by the connection to the waterfront and that the whole community is surrounded by nature, and that Healthy/Active element incorporates connections to nature.

Catterson agreed that nature is included through the connection to the waterfront and the pedestrian and trail network, but it could be strengthened. He likes the first bullet.

Liebelt said he had the most comments on this first element. He suggests taking out the phrase “people of all abilities”. He says its required and it seems redundant. He agrees the word “robust” should be replaced. We need to overemphasize. “Safe, convenient, reliable public transit system...” He would like “year-round bike and pedestrian network”. He wondered about “reliable and affordable access to information and technology” and if this means the library. He also felt the need to retain key infrastructure was missing. There was some discussion about what he meant by “infrastructure”. It was suggested the term “community anchors” could be used, as Liebelt was refereeing to things like the school, post office, library and theater.

Snow said that in her mind streets and highways are two different things. She would like “well maintained street/highway network”. She wanted to be clear that we mean transportation in the community of Douglas as well as to the rest of Juneau.

Sewall said that in general he is happy with the section. He suggested adding something about inclusiveness into the goals, which stretches beyond ADA and promote going above and beyond. He can see Snow’s point about the street network. He appreciates that downtown Douglas has a “walk around” development. We should think about safe walkways and reminded the committee that winter snow machine parking on 5<sup>th</sup> Street is part of the conversation.

McKibben suggested that “comprehensive” could replace “robust” in both bullets, as this was the concept she was trying to capture. She noted the “all abilities” language was meant to clearly show we were thinking about equity, but may be this is better captured in the text of the document.

Bookless stated that she works with people with disabilities and she questioned the plan implying that everything be made accessible. She also suggested that by repeating “all ages and abilities” is inequitable.

Liebelt likes the idea of expanding and explaining the concept in the text of the document.

McKibben said she would take these comments and revise the goals. The committee will have an opportunity to review the revised goals at a future meeting.

Bookless pointed out that the last goal had 2 options for language. She would like to be sure the goal includes language about the community being actively involved in decision-making, not just dialog.

Sewell likes the concept of retaining community anchors and would include the waterfront/harbor in that list. We need to protect the school. He also agrees with Bookless about being included in decision-making and not just dialog.

Bookless suggested an action of making Gastineau Elementary a “hot-spot” for Wi-Fi.

Vick left at 5:30.

Discussion moved to the “Distinctive Community” element and goals.

L. Smith suggested taking out the words “residents and visitors”.

Snow thought the goal about neighborhoods is connected to a goal in the Sustainable and Future Focused element.

Sewell thought it was well done. He mentioned the work of Sealaska in downtown Juneau and seeing these goals and supporting similar work in Douglas. He likes the concept of new housing being in character with the existing neighborhoods.

Bookless suggested removing “and” from the second goal and adding, “honor and celebrate” to the fourth goal. She would like some language about innovations that enhance and build communities that would support recommendations about co-housing, awnings etc. various ways to grow the community through our planning.

Catterson said he had no comments on this element.

Liebelt felt the first and fourth goals overlap and may be redundant. He agrees with honoring diversity but is not sure about celebrating diversity.

Discussion moved to “A Sustainable and Future Focused Community” element and goals.

Catterson had no comments on these goals.

Bookless said there is a difference between preservation and rehabilitation and that we want both. Sewell said he thought it looked good.

Liebelt thinks the fourth goal needs clarification.

L. Smith suggested adding, "promote" at the beginning of the fourth goal. She would add a hyphen to "future-friendly" She cannot picture what industrial uses mean in this context.

Peterson noted that in relationship to the second goal that one would think we had all the electric power we would ever need, but that is not the case and that it is a good idea to keep this goal.

Snow said this is a 20-year plan and that technology moves fast and it is best left general. She noted that "well built" housing is often not "affordable". She acknowledged that it is a good goal to strive for.

McKibben suggested the first goal could be revised to remove the list of land uses and leave it a bit more general.

Snow mentioned she had heard a rumor that a fish processor had purchased Tanners.

#### Parking

McKibben noted that she was unsure about what sort of recommendations to make about parking. Parking has been mentioned by the steering committee, by focus groups and during the public outreach but she is unclear about what the issue is.

Bookless said there is not enough parking. She mentioned the store that ended up not opening because of parking challenges.

Liebelt does not think there is a parking problem.

Peterson mentioned there has been a lot of work done on the parking requirements since the store wanted to open. A Douglas parking district could be an option.

Catterson says visibility when pulling out from side streets seeing vehicles moving in the travel way is challenging.

Sewell said as a 20-year plan he would like to see land not "wasted" on parking. For example, the harbor parking lot is heavily used but during the winter is mostly a vacant wasteland. He likes the way the library is above the parking.

Bookless said she has a number of funny/sad stories about parking on the street.

Snow suggested the plan be general and recognize there are parking needs. She agreed pulling out from on street parking is difficult.

Liebelt noted that since much of Douglas was developed demographics and vehicle ownership have changed, and generally, households own more cars than they used.

McKibben noted that the parking challenges of the proposed store in Douglas instigated the development of a parking waiver option, which creates flexibility that wasn't previously available.

**VI. Draft Strategies/Actions**

This will be discussed at a future meeting when work on the goals has been completed.

**VI. Committee Comment**

None.

**VII. Scheduling Future Meetings**

McKibben said according to the doodle poll the next meetings could be August 2, 16 and 30. The committee agreed to meet all three days.

**VIII. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:32 pm.