Beaverhead County Planning Board Regular Meeting
Commissioners' Meeting Room - Courthouse
December 10, 2020 at 1:00 pm



At 1:00 p.m. the Regular Planning Board Meeting commenced.

Planning Board Members Present: Chairman Larry Volkening, Kristen Bailey, Ken Scalzone, Barry Emge, Rich Lawson, Larry Yuhas, Kelly Rowe,

Planning Board Members Absent: Vana Taylor, Justin Stanchfield

Others Present: County Planner Rob Macioroski, GIS Coordinator Tracy Sawyer, County Sanitarian Tom Wagenknecht, Celine Beaucamp-Stout, Jessica Murray, Ed Mooney, Rochelle Van Worth

Opening: Chairman Larry Volkening opened the meeting at 1:00 p.m.

Action on Previous Minutes:

MOTION: Ken moved to approve the minutes from the November 19, 2020 Planning Board meeting as submitted. Kristen seconded the motion. A verbal vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Planning Board Member Reports:

Larry asked for reports from members.

Ken, Kristen and Larry stated that they do not have anything to report.

Barry reported that the ski hill opened up over thanksgiving weekend. They are only skiing half the hill. The ski hill is open for pass holders only for right now. The School was on lock down since last Tuesday due to a positive COVID test.

Rich said their ski hill is open and a few people have been skiing. There are a lot of places for sale in the Wisdom area. But besides that, things are pretty quiet.

Kelly reported that they are working on building pad for Anderson fencing. They are moving their business and will now be located on Twin Bridges Road. Hilton Electric purchased Anderson Fencings old shop. Johnson property has a few issues going on with that project so they are working on getting that handled.

Planner's Report:

Rob said that we are working closely with the flood plain people out of Helena. We are set to have a second open house meeting on January 21, 2021 from 5:30-7:30pm in the Lewis and

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Stacey Reynolds, Clerk and Recorder
By: Kelsey Luttrell

Clark room at the college. Due to COVID we will only be able to have 25 people in the room at a time. We are looking at having it adopted by 2022.

Public Comments & Questions:

Beaverhead Trail Coalition:

Celine reported that the trails along the "M" in the hills are Beaverhead Trail Coalition property. Right now, the Coalition is working on the trails along the golf course. She put together a report that shows a combination of surveys and data in reference to trails and the impact they have on our community. She focuses mostly on trails in the Beaverhead Valley. She referenced page 6 in her report saying that trails and parks are a desire to people in the community. Trails contribute to the Rural lifestyle, as well as longevity to your life. She referenced Page 11 in her report that has a survey showing the percentage of people that use the trails, the impact it has on health and the types of activities practiced.

She references Page 14 that shows the growth of Beaverhead County and how it is rapidly expanding. In Beaverhead County over 1,200 homes were built from 1990 to 2018. She asks the question "What can we do to provide what people want for their health and safety?". She said that trails boost local economy. A case study was done in Whitefish to show a similar sized community and the economic impact it had. She pulled some data from public health showing that the number one disease is heart disease. She stated that having trails improves health and makes you happier therefore consuming more. They are putting trails into neighborhoods that already exist which is very expensive to do and is also very difficult. The goal is to incorporate the trails into the plans of development for new neighborhoods. You can access the resources and links online to read more about the trail coalition.

Public Comments & Questions:

Kelly asked Celine if there are plans for future paths. Celine referenced page 20 in her report where it shows a map of priority locations, she is focused mostly on the Valley. Kelly mentioned that Larry created a map of the County that Celine can access. Celine stated that the map in her report is not set in stone and can be changed. Larry said that part of developing this Growth plan for the next several years is to consider recreational plans and to have them built into that growth plan.

Rob discussed his experiences in Butte when he was on the Greenway Board. A lot of trails were developed up there and it was amazing to see how many people utilized those trails. It

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made a substantial impact on people's health and helped the local businesses, creating more foot traffic. Kelly said that Larry and him have discussed their differences for years about pre-planning on subdivisions and that a huge hurdle was not having enough funds to maintain the trails. Celine said that there are trails that are easy to maintain and that volunteers can help maintain those trails. Celine reiterated the importance of having these trails as part of the development to reduce initial costs. Kelly stated that when they are working on subdivisions he really tries to push for an easement. Larry said that the good thing about the Planning board is being able to have a comprehensive approach in order to explore options that will fit into the policies.

Growth Policy Survey Results

In the previous Planning Board meeting Larry asked for people to send him three points of interests, so the process can keep going. The purpose of this approach is to get opinions from the outside source and break them down into different categories. He does not want this to cover up or take place of the results from the survey but rather use these points of interests as a tool for further depth. These points of interests thus far consisted of the following: Introduction and Education, Land use, Infrastructure, County Economy and Business growth, as well as Affordable housing. Larry referenced the survey in regards to lack of education and knowledge from the community of who we are, and how we are related to the City and what they do. People are not aware that we are two different entities. He strongly recommends having the beginning of the growth plan be a statement/ introduction about who we are and what we are doing. That may help clear some things up and solve some of the problems that have been going around.

Land Use consists of setting up the rules, there are certain rules that need to be followed. In the packet Larry distributed during the meeting there is a synopsis of the land use in Section 2. Larry moves forward into discussion about the Infrastructure and how we have mostly roads. The question was asked "What can we do about the roads"?

Larry states that County Economy and business growth is pretty simple. What are we going to do about the growth and income? Which boils down to Affordable housing. We have constantly fought the concept about low income development which should be addressed in the new growth plan. Larry added the question about Comprehensive recreation plans along the lines of requiring subdivisions to start incorporating recreation into their development.

Larry provided a packet during the meeting that talks about Montana Code (Title 76) Land Resources and Use. Once we have a growth plan we can then give it to Jerry G and he can see

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how that will fit into the code. Every growth plan is unique to each County and Beaverhead County does not have a specific approach established for over growth.

Public Comments & Questions:

Ken asked the question when it comes to affordable housing what are the road blocks and who defines what's affordable? Kelly answered this question stating that the renter is charged based off what they make and that it cannot exceed more than 30% of your salary. Ken asked how do we encourage the development of affordable housing in our community. Would it be helpful to do a survey in order to know what the average income is? Per Kelly, some of the road blocks in this process is the price of property, wages and taxes. The question was asked "shouldn't there be some incentives to break the ice on affordable housing?"

Kelly states that he thinks there should be grants for developers to be able to apply for in order to help build low income housing in certain areas. There was discussion about how in addition to having low income housing there is also a need for employment opportunities to be available to people.

Larry asked about the idea of planning suitable land areas ahead of time that can be put into the growth plan. Those designating land areas can be used for the development of affordable housing. If a developer comes in he would have to meet certain standards in order to build, one of those criteria would be affordable housing.

Barry stated that he wanted to address a couple of comments in regards to the survey some of which were negative comments about the City. He thinks that its imperative that we try and make some kind of communal connection between the County and City. There was discussion amongst the group that the City and County need to have more cohesion when it comes to growth in our community. There needs to be more infrastructure about sewer and water. The growth in our community is going to be mostly here in Dillon and the city is locking itself up in regards to having lots at the end of the water pivot. It was suggested that people come to the County in order to build instead of the City because its an easier process and that the City is land locking.

Tom stated that there is also a cost to be considered because the city expects the developers to carry the cost of the infrastructure on themselves and when that's done it makes it cheaper and more economical to develop in the County rather than in the City. The City should utilize more of the funds available to help with those costs like grant money and also funds from the water and sewer district in order to expand development.

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Kristen asked about having a County and City representative. Rob stated that last year the commissioners appointed someone to sit in for the City Planning board. That individual should report to us twice a year. It is unknown at this point if that individual has been attending any of the meetings. There was discussion about reaching out the City and trying to get them more involved in our meeting to help bridge the gap and address the issues and concerns for growth.

Ed joined the meeting and stated that he was apart of the City Planning Board and that the City has a growth and zoning plan. They outlined areas in the City that are a potential problem. There is a reluctance of leadership for the City to work with the County. It is unknown exactly what the reluctance is. Per Larry, we could meet with the City but we are also in a timeline restraint in order to get a growth plan established for the County. Once something is put into place we could possibly reach out and begin to work with the City better in order to build that working relationship.

The group discussed how internet access has impact on development. Three Rivers received a grant to help provide internet services to rural areas. High speed internet will help determine if developers want to build in that area. Larry stated that it would be helpful to create some type of map that would show the areas that have good internet service and amenities and then provide those maps to developers. Tracy was asked if there was a map that could be used for something like that. Tracy said that there have been some studies but that there isn't a central location. That would be something that we would have to work on.

Larry said that he would like to see an overview of where the best places are to build. In terms of best suited areas for development. An overview of the best quality places to build that would also be beneficial to the County.

Kelly said that he thinks there are already maps out there available for people to look at in regards to where to build. His concerns with the County providing the maps are that we could be putting ourselves into a liability issue. Larry said that a Permit to build needs to be established in order to help with the layout of development that would allow expansion. People don't know where to go to obtain information about building, development and where to start. There was discussion about creating a checklist to give to people to help educate them about the process. Having a website put together about where to go and who to contact for information.

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Tom stated that when they redid the waste water treatment system for the City of Dillon it had to be built to be able to accept more growth, around 20%. It obligates the community to expand their infrastructure. Tom stated that his concern is that people are putting in their own septic tanks and water systems instead of hooking onto the City. Larry asked the question is there Currently in the County available area to hook into sewer and main? Per Tom, Yes, There is room for expansion for people to do that. Water and Sewer also needs to be considered in expansion and growth.

In summary, everyone agrees that development and growth is inevitable. What's important is the way we handle it. Larry stated that he would like everyone work on a vision/mission statement for what's going to happen in the next twenty years.

ADJOURN:

With no further business to discuss, Barry moved and Kelly seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 2:26pm

Submitted:

Secretary

Approved By:

Larry Volkering

Chairman

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