

USCC - Minutes July 17, 2017

Call to Order at 7:10

Present: Jan, Brian, Anna, Amy & Michael

Approval of Minutes

Approval of the last meeting: Jan moved to approve Brian second

Treasurer's Report

Michael Vernon read through the financial report, which is now posted to the site under About, Financial Reports

Water Committee Report:

- Art Martin describes the most recent meetings

Since the last meeting we continue to focus primarily on building the relationship with the Snowmass Water and Sanitation District and secondarily to continue to educate ourselves about all the issues that have occurred over the past twenty or so years. Also, we are building a library which will augment the information that I have compiled already.

I attended the June District board meeting. It was mostly concerning a construction contract for the water treatment plant. After about two hours of that topic there was an interesting presentation by their water consultants which I was allowed to listen in on, which covered where the District water rights are in the priority system and the conditions which could make the District vulnerable in terms of delivering water. Their primary focus is being able to serve their customers. That is the reason for their existence.

I met with Kit Hamby for the second time last week and we spent a fair amount of time reviewing some of the history and going back to the early days, 1978 agreement and 1995 agreement and looking at the issues that came up at that time with our drainage so that I could get the district perspective on it. As I said last time, I believe the district perspective is a have good relationship with the Snowmass Creek valley but their primary mission and obligation is to serve their customers. Technically they have the right to take Snowmass Creek down to where it is sucked dry, but I can't imagine the circumstances that they would do that.

There was a concern about how much water they would take from the Creek as part of the buildup and development of Base Village. They showed me that the amount of water they would take out for the buildup would be no more than it was eight years ago in 2009. Part of the reason is because they had minimal water conservation and oversight and now they have much improved leak detection and also have obligations in slow years to institute various conservation measures which may include raising prices.

I will continue to build the relationship between the USCC and the District. We should work with the District to keep Snowmass Creek healthy.

Web Site Report:

Jan Martin - The web site is almost complete. We have one more content piece, the addendum to the By-Laws, to add. We believe it will be available soon, and will add it to the By-Law section. Please review the site one last time for any suggestions pertaining to additions or deletions which we can then incorporate into the final edition. Once we have completed this last review, we can go live.

Master Plan Status:

Jan read aloud through the summary of the results of the Master Plan Survey:

Fifty-one residents responded to the Master Plan Questionnaire regarding their preferences for the direction of the Upper Snowmass Creek Caucus's Master Plan. Not all questions were answered by all respondents indicating a particular statement was either not clear or was not meaningful to that person. The fewest responses to those questions were forty-eight. Rounding errors may occur in determining percentages.

Additionally, comments on the questionnaire by attendees were taken at the May and June meetings of the Caucus.

Below please find the results.

GROWTH AND ZONING

On the matter of growth and zoning there is a strong preference, nearly one hundred percent, for maintaining the rural and agriculture character of the valley. Ninety-three percent of those responding prefer the prohibition of multi-family housing developments in the area, opting instead for a continuation of the current County policy of low density single family units. Seven per cent of those polled mildly disagree with the prohibition of multi-family housing.

The statement regarding the continuation of the existing County Land Use Code including the use of Transfer Development Rights in the Caucus area was strongly supported by eighty-six percent of respondents with another six percent mildly in agreement. Another six percent had no opinion on TDRs and there was one person who mildly disagreed with the statement.

Opinions varied more broadly on construction finishes corresponding with natural mountain environment colors. Thirty-seven percent strongly agreed with the notion. Twenty-one percent mildly agreed while thirty-five percent had no opinion. Nine percent mildly disagreed with the need for complementary colors, and five percent strongly disagreed with the need.

ROADS

Regarding roads in general in the Caucus area, fifty-nine per cent of those responding feel that Watson Divide and Snowmass Creek Road are in need of safety improvements. Another thirty-three percent mildly agree that more safety improvements are needed. Six percent have no opinion regarding the issue and two percent disagree with the statement.

A strong preponderance of the respondents, seventy-three percent, would like to see guardrails installed on Watson Divide. Sixteen per cent mildly agree they are necessary. Twelve percent either have no opinion or mildly disagree with the idea. Two percent strongly disagree with guardrail installation.

The issue of further paving of public roads in the Upper Snowmass Creek area resulted in a broad spectrum of opinions. The majority of respondents favor further paving of Snowmass Creek Road. Thirty-seven per cent strongly disagree with the statement that no further paving is necessary. Another twenty-seven percent mildly disagree that further paving is unnecessary. Twelve per cent have no opinion regarding paving. Twenty-two per cent either strongly disagree or mildly disagree with more paving.

It is interesting to note the attitude of the respondents regarding speed limits. Only twenty-four percent strongly agreed with strict enforcement of the posted limits. Eighteen per cent mildly agree with aggressive enforcement. Another twenty-four per cent have no opinion regarding the matter, and twenty-seven per cent mildly disagree with strict enforcement. Comments from those disagreeing with enforcement indicated that limits were too low for some areas of the road.

Generally most respondents agree that county roads in the area should be maintained to current standards. However, there was strong disagreement with the statement that Snowmass Creek Road should be widened and improved to accommodate additional traffic. Only eight per cent either strongly or mildly support widening, while seventy-nine percent strongly or mildly disagree. Comments on the exception to widening relate to improving some curves for better visibility on the road.

On the matter of constructing a biking/pedestrian trail system along Snowmass Creek Road, most respondents disagreed with the idea. Forty-six per cent strongly disagree with the construction. Another seventeen per cent mildly disagree with the idea. Ten per cent have no opinion. Fifteen per cent strongly supported the idea, and ten per cent mildly were in favor of a biking/pedestrian trail.

The statement that the Upper Snowmass Creek Caucus should work with the Sno/Cap Caucus on road matters to insure uniformity of maintenance and safety again saw divergent opinions. Thirty-one percent strongly favor the idea. Sixteen percent mildly agree. Twenty-two percent mildly disagree with cooperation. Eight percent strongly disagree with the concept and eighteen percent have no opinion.

WATER

Consensus returned on whether the primary goal of the Caucus should be to preserve, enhance, and protect the water resources of Snowmass Creek. Nearly one hundred per cent favor the statement. Once again, however, when asked about working in concert with the Sno/Cap Caucus on the issue, opinions varied. Thirty-four percent strongly agree that that is the best course. Twenty-two percent mildly agree. Twenty-eight percent have no opinion, and sixteen percent mildly disagree with cooperation.

There is general agreement that monitoring water quality and quantity throughout the Snowmass Creek watershed to maintain stream flows and protect groundwater is important. A cautionary comment was submitted regarding the cost involved with this policy.

FIRE

There is nearly universal agreement with the statement that it is important to promote land use and forest management strategies to mitigate increased wildfire potential. Ninety-two percent support the idea with eight percent having no opinion. Similarly, there is agreement with the concept of encouraging wildfire resistant building and landscaping in the area. Only six percent of respondents disagree with requiring a fire mitigation plan with Land Use application.

Almost all respondents agree that the Upper Snowmass Creek Caucus should assist residents in assessing fire mitigation practices for defensible spaces through educational literature and presentations.

All but one respondent believes the Caucus should work with State and local fire experts to develop an emergency plan for residents of the Caucus area to address evacuation and/or survival without services in the event of a natural or man-made disaster.

AGRICULTURE

There is general accord among respondents for the need to be vigilant concerning noxious weeds. Opinions were near unanimous concerning the desire for the Caucus to coordinate with the County to address weed management. Additionally, there was near unanimity for requiring Land Use applications to include a weed management plan with only one dissenting vote.

On the subject of marijuana, eighty-four percent strongly agree that the growth, packaging, product infusion, testing and sales of marijuana should be prohibited within the Caucus boundaries. Four percent strongly disagreed with the prohibition, ten percent had no opinion, and two percent mildly agreed with the statement regarding prohibition.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

The respondents were in unison with the need to pursue and support efforts to improve quality and access to telecommunication services with ninety-six percent strongly agreeing with the statement. Four percent had no opinion.

RECREATION

Opinions were mixed regarding the need to establish adequate and safe parking at trailheads. Thirty-four percent strongly agree with the statement, and thirty-two percent mildly agree. Conversely, four

percent strongly disagree with the need for parking improvements at trailheads with eleven percent mildly disagreeing with the concept. Nineteen percent have no opinion. Comments against improvements cited the potential for more traffic in the area with larger parking areas.

A similar distribution in opinions resulted when the percentages were calculated in regard to the statement that public rights-of-way need to be established for access to public lands. Thirty-three percent strongly agreed. Twelve percent mildly agreed while twenty-three percent have no opinion. Ten percent strongly disagreed, and twenty three percent mildly disagree.

There is general acceptance that the Caucus should encourage the Forest Service to consult with it if and when new Recreational Site Analysis is scheduled. Nearly 100 percent of respondents were either strongly or mildly in favor of this proposition.

The majority of respondents are not in favor of permitting celebratory fireworks displays in the Caucus area with sixty-six percent strongly disagreeing with the idea. Another six percent mildly oppose the concept. Fourteen percent have no opinion, while fourteen percent either strongly or mildly endorse the idea. Comments against cited the concern about fire potential and disturbance of domestic and wild animals.

So these are the results that we as a board will now take and apply to the master plan. And again, we have reached out to those - you don't have to be on the board to contribute to the plan. Anybody who wants to, and we have already had a reluctant volunteer to write one of the sections. We will probably each take a section and write it and then we will go over it and then we will put that together and send it out to the board for comment and then after we get everybody's criticisms and add-ons and subtractions will then give it to the County who will then critique it themselves. I am going to extend out the board tomorrow the different sections so you all can choose which one you want to take on. And then we will kind of get that back and get back together to see kind of how we stand -- by the way, if anybody has a section that we don't have that we haven't done? Bring it up. We can add it so this is just again a part of the process.

Other Business

Brian: There is a tentative date for the Caucus Picnic of August 13. And kind of a view online of the invite so we will send that out to the residents and get to a number of attendees as we get that information back. Is that it?

We are adjourned.

Grateful to all in attendance - Thank you all.