

Teton County and the cities of Victor and Driggs are engaged in the preparation of a new zoning and subdivision code funded by a Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (see www.sustainableyellowstone.org for more information). The project includes the preparation of new development regulations for each of the jurisdictions involved.

On November 13 and 14, 2012, Code Studio (a planning and code consulting firm from Austin, Texas—see www.code-studio.com) conducted a series of informal interviews with a broad spectrum of individuals or groups who have an interest in the outcome of the code drafting process. Interviews were held with the following groups (a list of participants is provided at the end of this report):

- Planners, Designers and Engineers
- Downtown Businesses
- Real Estate Interests
- Elected and Appointed Officials
- Environmental Interests
- City/County Staff
- Economic Development
- Landowners

This document brings together input gathered during the stakeholder interviews. The stakeholder interviews will be part of a diagnostic report that outlines how updated regulations could better implement local plans, provide more predictable and easier to use regulations, and bring national best practices to the Teton Valley. To aid with review of this material, comments have been organized by topic.

Project Direction

- Do anything other than regulate – look at market-based and non-regulatory solutions instead.
- Education, design principles – demonstrate you can do well by doing good – need best practice examples.
- We should focus on things that we can all agree on as a community.
- In terms of public outreach, people always feel like they are left out of the process.
- Concern about large group meetings on the project – might not be very productive – people come to the meeting with the idea that decisions have already been made – would be more open to a larger public meeting if there was an open house component.
- Proposed design session/charrette will be tough because of the size of the community and three distinct geographical areas the work has to cover.
- Bring an economist to the charrette – include local professionals to the extent possible – lots of conservation subdivision experts in Teton Co Wyoming.
- Trying to over regulate what state or Federal government already regulates.

- Would like to see a road map of how drafts will be circulated.
- Need solid examples – hard to grasp otherwise – have 2,000-acre parcel – talk us through the rules that apply today and show us how things would be different based on the proposed rules.
- Idaho has three “state capitals” – Boise, Spokane and Salt Lake City – won’t get any support from any of these places – need to do it ourselves.
- For the Comprehensive Plan, roadshows were conducted around the County, there was a lot of fear – people needed to hear the facts.

Approval and Review Process

- Talk to Grand Teton Vodka – located in the Driggs Impact Area – they were not happy with their recent approval process.
- Dreamchasers – approval process for them went well – wanted to be downtown – can walk to a number of places.
- The proposed Church just outside of Victor in the County was a very contentious issue – the County denied the application – now going to be located in Victor – everybody is a lot happier.
- Need to give breaks because of the economy on expiring plats.
- Need an easy administrative minor platting process.
- There is a new replatting ordinance – no fees, no studies – one hearing; allows for a one-time lot split and AG-20 split to carve out additional farm land.
- Uncertainty is a problem – to buy land you need to know exactly what you can build.
- Make it easier to replat.
- County has serious process issues – can we help put together a reasonable approval process.
- Got to have better enforcement – right now nothing gets enforced – financial responsibility – need to have enough money allocated to hire new people and to have penalties set up by state law.
- Require real deposits, real bonds (subdivision ordinance has been amended to require this now)

Project Resources

- The Atlantic Cities– a good web-based planning resource.
- McCall, Idaho – The HUB Mountain House – mixed-use building – Ground story: Coffee house, information, store – Second story: Bed and Breakfast– Third story: Residential unit. This could be a viable model in Teton Valley.
- Bozeman has good places to check out – vertical mixed use, alleys, small lots – all anchored by a strip mall.
- “Sprawling from Grace” – movie about sprawl – worth watching.
- Telluride and Mountain Village – “The Lost People of Mountain Village” mockumentary, worth watching. Don’t want this to happen in the Valley.

- Talk to Jay Mazalewski (County Public Works) has a good handle on stormwater management issues as well as other things.
- Talk to Mark Ricks – large landowner.

Code Structure and Format

- Discussion of mixed use – single-story vs. vertical mixed use – nothing below the average height should be allowed – other required elements: 14’ to 16 foot sidewalk with buildings build-to with windows and doors.
- New code needs to be clear and concise on how it works – will help people to better understand the rules.
- Sign code is an issue – illustrations must be an important aspect of the new code.
- There is a fair amount of alignment between the two city codes – Driggs downtown regulations are more refined – Downtown Plan and Guidelines done by Siegel Planning Services.
- Could do bigger signs per the ordinance but cost of the sign is the real deterrent.
- Signs are big issue – County and cities.
- Driggs – working on some use table changes and refinements – cleaning up/reducing conditional uses and replacing with use standards.
- Victor – TND overlay needs some help – not a big fan of overlays.
- Victor has a TND ordinance – contains too many regulations – needs work.
- Home occupations – blacksmith needed space out in the County – could be difficult to do with the current zoning – would nice to be able to accommodate this.
- Driggs home-based business – conditional use permit required for up to 5 employees.
- There will be pushback from Public Works on alleys because of off-site snow removal – street too narrow – where to put the snow.
- Mountainside Village – good local example with alleys.
- Covered walkways in shopping centers make sense – make rules practical

Plans

- New County Commission - Comprehensive Plan will not be replaced – but it could be completely sidelined.
- Not a good match between the County Framework Plan and the Zoning Map.
- Recent election swing was a vote/statement against the recently adopted Comprehensive Plan.
- There is a need for more detailed area plans especially in places where things are still uncertain.
- Plan lightened up a bit based on input – it’s the zoning I am concerned about.
- “There has to be some planning”

Growth Management

- The County needs to grow West – Bates Road – have enough concentration to get shared water facilities.
- There is the perception that pushing development into the cities will vastly devalue the value of land out in the County.
- Before focusing on the cities, we have to level the playing field out in the County. It's currently cheaper and easier to build out there.
- We need to incentivize growth into the cities.
- Need to develop/push density into the cities.
- We need to think about the relationship between cost of services and density – road maintenance, police, fire, EMS.
- The County missed the boat on impact fees.
- Fair and legitimate to charge higher impact fees the further you get away from existing infrastructure.
- Make it hard to do a new subdivision in the County.
- 7,000 un-built lots – not built on because the land is not that desirable – 90% of these lots are south of Driggs. Most people that don't want any more lots are located in the southern part of the County.
- Need to think about being more self-sufficient as a community – Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), a place where you can live, work and play.
- TDR should be an option but difficult to make work – would have to artificially push down density in the cities – and all the cities would have to be continually involved.
- Areas close to town should be targeted for TDRs.
- People are genuinely interested in TDRs – should continue to discuss as an option.

Economic Development

- What is it going to take to attract people here to live or buy a second home in the area? A high amenity downtown, menu of housing options, quality of community events.
- 92% of people in Victor work outside of Victor – 60% to 70% commute to Jackson.
- Need someone with deep pockets to buy the Targhee ski resort and turn it into something with more year round opportunities- like Whistler.
- The dreaded Wal-Mart – not good for the community.
- Last year \$600,000 (54) real estate sales in Teton Valley; this year to-date \$3.1 million (61) - \$143 million in foreclosures in 2008/09.
- The Teton Valley Chamber, along with VARD, and Driggs recently hosted Don Rypkema, economic consultant, for a Workshop on “Planning property rights and downtown development” – He wrote a paper/or gave a speech in 2008 on Property Rights and Public Values in Idaho.
- 8,000 cars a day go through town a day in the summer – need to take of advantage this.
- Need consider an economic stimulus for smaller business in Driggs.

- Old Ford dealer – looking to turn it into a vocational/tech school – but it takes money to convert – would like to support the hospital with a nursing program – also could train people to support the local ski-binding industry.
- Have to make developing in the cities more financially attractive.
- No economic development silver bullet – need to improve amenities in the downtowns.
- Teton County, Idaho used to be one of the poorest counties in the State, now it is one of the wealthiest - new planning and zoning scheme has to reflect that change.
- Because of sale of foreclosures and distressed properties not selling much land.
- There have been three commercial sales in the County this year.
- One of Victor’s most important employers is CityPASS (produces and sells booklets containing discounted entrance tickets to groups of attractions in several major US cities) – originally started in Jackson with three employees – moved to Victor – now have 30 employees – most live in the Valley – three employees commute from Jackson.
- Victor/Driggs have done a good job at accommodating development.
- Need smaller spaces for start up businesses - 500 square feet for one to two people – start small and grow.
- Proposed **HB 516** – retroactive – speculative house built not taxed until it is occupied – applies to subdivisions as well.
- Airport an issue – master plan not adopted yet.

Downtowns

- Theater is going to have to change its business model – industry is going digital – 35mm films are going away in 2013 – can’t afford to switch - currently working on a Christmas play.
- Victor has got all the good restaurants, art galleries, Music on Main (the event really opened people’s eyes to the potential of Victor).
- Emporium has been open in some form for almost 60 years.
- What we have in place is not working – our clientele has diminished – need regulations in place that encourage economic development – this would be a positive.
- Redo all our main streets with better facades.
- Concern about absentee owners – buildings sitting vacant downtown – not keeping up their buildings – we are working to try and make rents more affordable.
- In downtown Victor there is a building that was started but never finished – now stuck with an unfinished foundation – complete it or take it back to the way it was – who is going to pay for it? Convert into a temporary park.
- Too many “for rent” signs in Downtown Driggs – would prefer to see a vibrant, active downtown.
- Tetonia – got potential – great views of the Tetons – bit rough around the edges – who is going to be willing to open up a business there?
- Need a bigger supermarket in Driggs – car dealer (not enough population).

Development Quality

- There is support for quality development.
- Want developers to go ahead with their project but want a certain quality of development – it's a delicate balance.
- “Developer needs to bring the right development to the table the first time around.”
- Garage placement rules? Have to be practical – need front-loaded options.
- Driggs - design review looks at such things as building material, bulk and mass, and landscaping.

Mobility

- Most of the trails are on public land – not sure how much influence the County has on the issue.
- Need more bike lanes, bike paths, and better connections.
- Not a good County for planned bike infrastructure.

Phantom Subdivisions

- Vacating subdivisions – going after easy pickings first – get people to consolidate together where they are the only people living in the subdivision – land swap/consolidate – reduce total number of subdivisions.
- Canyon Creek – originally 250 lots on 1,500 acres – getting replatted to 22 lots – lot sizes range from 150 acres to 20 acres – a viable solution.
- There are approximately 7,900 un-built platted lots in the County (the replatting of Canyon Creek might reduce number by 500).

Subdivisions

- Concern about family subdivisions and how to make sure they are allowed.
- Scottsdale, AZ – equestrian subdivision – works well.
- Saddleback Vistas – equestrian development – 2.5-acres to 5-acres lots – no water rights – lots were originally selling for \$300K, today they are selling for \$48K.
- Huntsman development had a huge impact on the City of Driggs – any profit from the development goes to Huntsman Cancer Institute.
- Good: River Rim development (Greg Norman golf course), Snow Crest Ranch, Mountain Village (different type of development), Teton Springs, Huntsman.
- Missing additional housing opportunities – townhomes, condos.
- Need a by-right option to cutoff a piece of land not less the 20 acres- you have 4,000 acres you want to sell off 80 acres and you already have road frontage – you should be able to do this very easily.
- Family farm split – Grand Junction has true AG zoning (60/1, 40/1) and you get a certain number of splits.

Zoning

- Too many 2.5 acre lots and not enough 5- or 10-acre lots.
- M-1 zoning requires every permitted use to be approved as a conditional use permit.
- Density – 2.5 acres to 20 acres – nothing in between. 2.5-acre lots are the real problem.
- Difference between 2.5 acres and 20 acres is huge.
- Need additional zoning categories and make them available to rezone to.
- Problem with the district names – Res/AG 2.5 - cannot do agriculture on 2.5 acres.
- Need more variety in districts – nothing larger than 20 acres, nothing between 2.5 acres and 20 acres.
- County minimum size for a PUD is 40 acres.
- Planned Unit Development needs fixing.
- Remove PUD density bonus

Zoning Map

- There will be fight on any down zoning on 2.5 acres lots – focus instead on environmentally sensitive design – keep the underlying entitlement.
- Tweaking the density is not going to work.
- We should concentrate on a density neutral approach – focus more on quality and preservation as a way to get more value out of your land but maintain the same level of entitlements – make things more predicable.
- Large landowners out in the County want to maintain a reasonable value for their land so when they need to they have financial options available to them.
- In favor of no changes to the 20 acre zoning.
- Underlying zoning doesn't match the geographical constraints of the land.
- Don't think we should change the map – with all the platted lots we have already done all the damage – nothing else is going to get built any time soon.
- Focus more on density neutral solutions to the problems.
- Control and restrictions – don't change a lot of the zoning.
- Think outside the box – AG zoning based on sliding scale – based on suitability of land for farming or wildlife habitat. Research examples.
- AG 2.5 wasteland – for the most part the land can't be farmed.

Recreation

- Would like to see more recreational opportunities – expansion of the trail system, community swimming pool.
- Other missing recreation facilities – ballfields, climbing wall, expanded ice rink.
- Missing a recreation center – gym, swimming pool, and running track.
- Need a recreation path that is near town but not along the road.
- Missing recreational opportunities – bowling alley, movie theatre, ice rink (need a more permanent option), ice arena, recreation center.

- Missing: recreation center, hotel, auditorium, different types of music events like Music on Main, need more community activities, need to become a destination other than a ski resort.

Environment

- No state regulation that specifies minimum one-acre lot size for a septic system – it's just what fits – anything smaller wouldn't work.
- The Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) manages the use of individual and subsurface sewage disposal systems, which include septic systems – Idaho Falls region.
- Unfortunately, one-acre lots are not cost prohibitive.
- Teton Valley has a very strong land trust - Teton Regional Land Trust – but they don't have the money to buy everything.
- State of Idaho is ahead of the curve – protects not only federally protected species but also looks ahead at others species so they don't get on the list.
- Cutthroat trout is one species they are trying to protect.
- Trout and stormwater controls – sedimentation, nitrogen and water temperature increase all affect the trout.
- Currently have good flood regulations.
- Protect the natural areas – golden goose.
- Large landowners are expected to provide the open space for the rest of the County.
- People don't understand rural clusters.
- Driggs has the only sewer treatment facility in the Valley.

Rivers

- Need to increase access to the Teton River- need a trail along the river – a lot of resistance from landowners along the river about allowing public access to the river.
- Preserve the Teton River, threatened by a number of things including the bureau of reclamation project – site houses so they are not visible from the water.
- Carve out Teton Creek as a special area.
- Teton Creek – mostly in area of impact.
- Need to make sure the County has the right regulations – need a river overlay to keep development backed off away from the river.
- “The river can be saved” – improve the economic value.

Wildlife Overlay

- Wildlife Overlay is another contentious issue.
- Biggest issue: Wildlife Overlay and utilizing the map – large landowners consider it a threat.

- Developers / landowners should get together and do a comprehensive Wildlife study.
- Current Wildlife Overlay has no teeth – that was intentional.
- It is newcomers that are the ones concerned about the wildlife.
- Why are they worried about all the wildlife – 50% of all the land in the County is public land and another 15% is owned by the land trust.
- Should talk to Jeff Klausmann - Intermountain Aquatics – consultant on the Comprehensive Plan – worked on the Wildlife Overlay Map – also a large landowner.

Scenic Corridor

- There is the perception that you can't develop anything in the Scenic Corridor.
- Is this process going to address the Scenic Corridor? Hard to define what people are trying to protect – preserve the “rural character” of the area – once determined easy to code for or develop design guidelines for.
- “Drictor” – commercialization of highway frontage is a real concern – need stronger commercial cores centered around the downtowns – keep the highway “rural.”
- Need to do a better job at broadcasting desired development patterns.
- Don't want to be another Prescott Valley, stripped out, one steel building after another.
- Scenic Corridor overlay is 330 feet deep.
- Viewsheds are important – no direction as to what rural character really is.
- Scenic Corridor – wow what a beautiful place – mainly between Victor and Driggs – “Drictor” – need design criteria.
- Scenic Corridor is scary – what are we trying to protect?
- Need to reform “Drictor.”

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