
Rural Character + Agricultural Heritage SC Meeting #1 - Minutes

SC MEETING #1 – 6/8/2011

In Attendance:

Subcommittee Members: Bonnie Reece, Bruce Arnold, Dennie Arnold, Jack Liebenthal, Sandy Mason, Tami Presta
County Staff: Angie Rutherford
Consultant team: Bruce Meighen, Jennifer Zung, Randy Blough, Rebecca Brofft

Sub-Committee Members Absent: Todd Woolstenhulme

- Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.
- The statement of Expectations for committee members was reviewed and all members in attendance signed and submitted the forms.
- Subcommittee leadership positions (chair, co-chair, and recorder) were described and the necessary qualities of individuals serving in these positions were discussed. Members were asked to nominate themselves or other members to serve in these positions.
- Motion and Vote
 - Bruce Arnold nominated Dennie as Chair, Jack as Co-Chair and Bonnie as Recorder. Sandy seconded the motion. Dennie, Jack and Bonnie accepted the nominations. All were in favor of the slate of candidates.
- Bruce Meighen reviewed the Comp Plan process, workbooks, and how information would be gathered and used.
- The schedule of the next meeting was discussed. The next meeting will be in approximately two weeks and the chair would be responsible for scheduling the next meeting. Discussed possibly meeting at 4 or 5 p.m. on Thursdays.

Values, Issues, and Opportunities Exercise:

Subcommittee members were asked to write what they thought were important values, issues, and opportunities related to Rural Character and Agricultural Heritage on sheets of paper and post them on the boards. Committee members were asked to discuss their number one issue, value and/or opportunity briefly. The comments included:

Values

- Open space
- Rural views
- Cropland
- Riparian and wetland areas
- Preserving family farming
- Quality of life
- Air and water quality
- Scenic views and night skies
- Laidback culture
- Low traffic
- Low crime

Issues

- Not enough or adequate roads to service agriculture; funding goes to car travel instead
- Some of the highest freight rates in the country
- Profitability and sustainability of cropland
- Maintaining rural open space character while allowing growth
- Soil quality, especially as it relates to organic farming
- Unattractive housing and development, eyesore properties
- Unattractive corridors

Opportunities

- Find ways to lower freight rates
- More organic crop production that is sustainable on smaller acreage
- Open space bond or incentives to help farmers and ranchers stay on their land
- Promote family farming
 - Provide additional opportunities for preserving family farming beyond just subdividing land for children
 - Need an easier way for large agricultural lots to subdivide for children in a family to protect family heritage
- Ensure that no industrial agriculture moves to community
- Encourage new farmers and support struggling agricultural operations
- Clean up and improve aesthetics of farms
- Locate development where it's attractive to community

The full List of Values, Issues and Opportunities that were posted by the committee members include:

Values

- Clean water for irrigation
- Open Spaces
- Quiet
- Locally produced products
- Large tracts of open space
- Local agriculture
- Night Skies
- Generational connection to land
- Preserve homesteaders' remaining evidence
- Maintenance of farming
- Family farm environment and culture
- Rural space
- Nature/being able to go into the wilderness alone and without noise. But with a chance to be with nature.
- Well thought-out growth patterns
- Rural views
- Where the landowners have more say about their property
- Keep our property cleaned up so it is attractive to those visiting our county
- Rural views
- Farmland
- Open Spaces
- Being a scenic corridor

- Heritage: remember those who have come before and their contribution
- Peaceful Environment: continue to make Teton Valley a peaceful place to live
- Maintain agricultural status
- Home town "comfort" feel. The sense of "small town" in our area.
- An excellent school system
- Variety of lifestyles
- Family: provide a community that supports and protects the family and family values
- Lost values
- Clean water for drinking
- Clean water for recreation
- Wildlife
- Wetlands
- Riparian habitat

Issues

- Different backgrounds result in differing views on what is "excellence"
- Differing views as to what constitutes "quiet" of natural surroundings
- Over development
- Too small to farm, too large to care for
- Ag/Development balance
- Don't let building occur where it is unattractive to other people
- Need more cooperation with decision makers
- Profitable ag
- Sustainable ag
- Density
- Sprawl
- Development in midst of farmland- usually vacant/transient
- Chemicals
- Recovery of failed developments in rural areas
- Maintaining rural character while allowing growth
- Defunct developments
- Economic reality of farming in Teton Valley
- Preserving the environment- night skies
- Land Development
- Non completed subdivisions with holes, rock piles, not reclaimed for ag use
- Differing thoughts on this issue
- Education: state funding too low- local funding not enough. Be more realistic about plans and growth
- Education: not let it slide backwards
- Transfer Station
- Waste water out of Colter Building
- Local high paying jobs
- Cost of living
- Steady tax base
- Economic Challenges: too much weight was placed on rapid growth and development. Scale down and support what is there
- Rapid Growth and Development that is now only an eyesore or not complete development

- Equal distribution of tax dollars
- Zone change to increase property values
- Housing needs- need lower cost housing for lower class workers
- False economy to no economy
- Weeds

Opportunities

- Work out diff areas for diff uses
- Organic crops
- Need lower fuel costs for agriculture
- Prevent industrial agriculture operations
- Programs to encourage established struggling agriculture
- Programs to encourage new agriculture
- More open space
- To keep the value by keeping our ideas so we can live by them
- Need better ag ?marras?
- To keep our property where if the families want to live thre you don't have to subdivide
- Structure splits to accommodate dividing acreages among children
- Open space bonds
- Incentives to farmers/ranchers to stay on the land
- Promote small local production of food/goods
- Locavore movement in the US
- The valley itself. This will always be a beautiful valley- protect it and preserve it- Don't sell it away
- Take opp to insist (make mandatory) meetings with parents re: core values. So input is shared
- Planning to protect each other
- Variety of lifestyles
- Diverse religious opportunities
- Rec Center for kids (activities center)
- Animal shelter for lost or abandoned animals- I fell this is vital in our area to keep one.
- Downturn in (growth) and economy to think and talk together about what we've seen happen so far and how we can improve upon it
- Higher land values
- To brand TV as a green/ag community
- Agricultural tourism
- Always be a bedroom community and support to Jackson
- Increase the availability of economic development

Action Items:

- All committee members will reach out to others in the community and collect “Values, Issues, and Opportunities” on the sheets provided. PDF’s of the sheets are attached to these minutes. Sheets will be turned in to Angie at the County planning office.

The meeting was closed at 9:00 p.m.