

MINUTES

PLANNING COMMISSION Committee of the Whole Meeting City and Borough of Juneau Mike Satre, Chairman

Review of Draft Auke Bay Area Plan

I. ROLL CALL

Dennis Watson, Vice Chairman, called the Committee of the Whole meeting of the City and Borough of Juneau (CBJ) Planning Commission (PC), held in the Assembly Chambers of the Municipal Building, to order at 6:03 pm.

Commissioners present: Dennis Watson, Vice Chairman;
Bill Peters, Michael LeVine, Nicole Grewe,
Gordon Jackson, Dan Miller, Paul Voelckers

Commissioners absent: Mike Satre, Chairman; Ben Haight

Staff present: Hal Hart, Planning Director; Beth McKibben, Senior Planner;
Teri Camery, Senior Planner; Eric Feldt, Planner II;
Tim Felstead, Planner I; Chrissy McNally, Planner I;
Allison Eddins, Planner I

II. REGULAR AGENDA

AME2013 0012: Review of the Draft Auke Bay Area Plan.
Applicant: City and Borough of Juneau
Location: Borough-wide

Recommendations from CBJ Port Director

Mr. Feldt told the Commission he had four items regarding the Draft Plan he wished to address. The first item was regarding the comments made by Carl Uchtyl, CBJ Port Director. Mr. Uchtyl had recommended adding some UAS (University of Alaska Southeast) data to the Plan, said Mr. Feldt. While it was good data, said Mr. Feldt, the Plan is broad in scope, and not currently outlined at that level of specificity.

Mr. Uchtyl had also requested that certain groups be identified for the management of certain goals and policies, said Mr. Feldt. He noted those bodies were left out intentionally, because the

committee did not want to get too far ahead of itself, and it did not know the amount of staff time identifying those goals and policies would consume.

Recommendations from Juneau Commission on Sustainability

The Juneau Commission on Sustainability submitted comments from the Juneau Climate Action Plan which were very specific in nature, said Mr. Feldt. These items would be very easy for the Commission or the Assembly to incorporate into the Area Plan as a reference, said Mr. Feldt, which is their recommendation.

Land Ownership Map

It was brought to their attention that three islands in the Channel Islands State Marine Park are in fact owned by the state, said Mr. Feldt, which needs to be clarified in the existing packet.

Auke Bay Steering Committee Recent Action

The Auke Bay Steering Committee met several weeks ago and addressed four items, said Mr. Feldt:

1. The modification and clarification of language in the view shed section
2. Edits of land use and recreation portions with consolidation into the land use section of the Plan with modification of the map located in Appendix C
3. Ensure that the language reflects an aspirational tone as suggested and reviewed by the Law Department rather than dictate actions to the CBJ reflecting a regulatory tone
4. Ensure that the Comprehensive Plan land use designation, primarily for the center or core of Auke Bay, sets up a vision for the proposed town center

Mr. Feldt said he presented the Draft Plan to the Assembly the night before, (February 9, 2015), and it was well received. The Assembly wanted to ensure that City funds were not inadvertently dedicated to any proposed projects in the plan, said Mr. Feldt, which ties back to the aspirational as opposed to regulatory tone of the language.

While the tone of the Plan is aspirational, said Mr. Feldt, the guidance it provides is real. The staff is working hard for the next step of the Plan which will be implementation of the Plan, said Mr. Feldt.

Commission Questions and Comments

Mr. Voelckers referenced the proposed Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map noting that he was a little surprised that some property still remained with some vestigial Marine Use zoning, and that he preferred the Medium Density Residential zoning as a type of boundary coming into the proposed town center area. He asked why the staff seem to prefer the Marine Mixed Use zoning as opposed to the Medium Density Residential zoning.

Mr. Feldt responded that the isolated marine mixed use pieces of property to which Mr. Voelckers referred were beyond the center boundaries really addressed by the Committee. Those “islands” of Marine Mixed Use zoning do look strange, said Mr. Feldt, and will be re-evaluated during the next Comprehensive Plan amendment process which is expected to take place within the next few years. Also, stated Mr. Feldt, some of these individual property owners have not yet been notified of the process.

Mr. Hart added that this situation also arose because the Committee was operating from a position of consensus, which is a much stronger planning model leading to a stronger probability of implementation.

Mr. Voelckers asked if this implies that adjusting the zoning of the pieces of property under discussion currently zoned Marine Mixed Use would necessarily result in conflict from the property owners.

Stating that he had attended a number of the meetings, Mr. Jackson said he was surprised that some of the synergies of the University did not mesh with some of the plans he sees expressed on paper. He added he did like the fact that the cultural vision for the area was expressed in the Plan, and the historical significance of the Auke Bay people for the area.

UAS Chancellor John Pugh attended a recent Steering Committee meeting and provided valuable insight, said Mr. Feldt. While not all synergy elements between UAS and Auke Bay may be expressed in the plan, said Mr. Feldt, other elements are, such as increasing pedestrian connections between UAS and Auke Bay, year-long maintenance of pedestrian trails and sidewalks, and transit use, which would be of benefit for university students.

The transference of private property to UAS is a longer-term issue to be addressed, said Mr. Hart. As part of this process said Mr. Hart, they now have a staff member attending the master planning sessions of UAS. This is an example of the synergy which Mr. Jackson was referencing, said Mr. Hart. Other issues such as future private property claims for UAS were beyond the scope of the Plan at this time, said Mr. Hart.

Mr. Jackson suggested that this could be addressed in the next implementation phase of the Plan.

Ms. Grewe stated she wanted to reiterate that her concern for the speed limit in the Auke Bay area differs from the methodology utilized by the Department of Transportation (DOT) for setting the speed limit. She said while the DOT sets speed limits based upon actual behavior that she felt, being a planner by trade and education, that she felt if there is a certain concept for a community hub or a town center that the design and behavior should be set accordingly.

She noted that the vision regarding traffic speed on Page 41 of the Plan was, “To reduce speeds in the Hub by transforming the character of the community to a safe, walkable Small Town

Center.” Ms. Grewe asked if this was the strongest language related to transportation in the plan.

Mr. Feldt stated that the broad goal 10 on page 48 states that, “Auke Bay will be a comfortable, inviting and safe place to walk and bicycle for everyone, including children, elderly, and school groups.” In addition, he said, Policy 10.1 is to, “implement traffic calming measures to reduce traffic speeds.” He noted that is followed by the policy put forth to work with DOT&PF (Department of Public Transportation and Public Facilities) to reduce the speed to a maximum of 30 mph in the Hub.

Mr. Feldt said he interpreted these as goals which could be implemented in phases either as development occurs or after DOT employs a traffic count initiating changes in the speed limit. These policies have been suggested following a lot of discussion by the Steering Committee and with Department of Transportation, said Mr. Feldt.

Ms. Grewe asked if there would be set opportunities in the future to change the speed limit in the area in concert with DOT. She said the last time DOT spoke with the Commission it seemed quite entrenched in its methodology.

Mr. Hart said at the end of the next implementation project for the area in 2016 which includes sidewalks and improvements by DOT, the area traffic will be reviewed again by DOT as a result of these improvements. Each project in the area will begin changing the Auke Bay town center environment, said Mr. Hart. There is also the idea of implementing a gateway feature to the community which would have a traffic-calming effect, said Mr. Hart.

Mr. LeVine asked what the process was for the document from now to its completion. He asked what happens to input received from the community in terms of the process of its incorporation into the document.

Mr. Feldt said they would like the existing Auke Bay Steering Committee members to remain involved in the process and began analyzing zoning district changes. They would like to consolidate a lot of the various zones within the core area, he said. Part of that process will also be looking at height regulations, massing of buildings and the preservation of views, said Mr. Feldt. They also want to assure that parking is not a restriction to development ~~they want to~~ encourage, said Mr. Feldt.

Mr. Hart added they have not received consensus on the issue of parking in the area.

The document goes before the Assembly on February 23, (2015), said Mr. Feldt.

Mr. Watson said when considering height requirements in the area to keep in mind that construction is occurring against steep slopes in many instances. He said he has noted since the construction of the roundabout that traffic has calmed throughout the area significantly.

Mr. Watson noted the parking referenced at Auke Bay School on Page 34 is no longer allowed at Auke Bay school during non-school months. A temporary agreement with the school district may be negotiated with [CBJ](#) Docks and Harbors while construction is underway, said Mr. Watson. He said he is disappointed that the school district is being rigid about the parking being curtailed during months when the parking lot is not being used by the school district.

The traffic count through the Auke Bay school area is only ten percent higher than the traffic count of Gastineau school right, now said Mr. Watson. There has been one accident in the area since 2007, said Mr. Watson.

Mr. Jackson said he would like to see a formal steering committee with bylaws named in the document. He said he has seen too many plans sit on a shelf, and he felt a formal steering committee would assist with implementation of the plan.

Mr. Hart said implementation of the plan is an extremely important component.

III. **OTHER BUSINESS** - None

IV. **REPORT OF REGULAR AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES** - None

V. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.