

Doney Park-Timberline-Fernwood Area Plan Update Committee
Meeting Notes July 9, 2020 5:00-8:00 pm
Zoom Meeting

I. Welcome, Introductions, Updates and Public Comment

Bryan Bates opened the meeting at 5:00 p.m. The following attended:

Committee members

Bryan Bates (co-chair)
John Ruggles
Evelyn Wannie
Rob Wilson (co-chair)
Dave Browning
Harriet Young
Monica Julian
Jim Clifford
Cameron Watson (new committee member)
Liz Baldwin
Bernice Carver
Saylor Caudill

Staff

Melissa Shaw
Jess McNeely

Presenters

Sarah Benatar – Coconino County Treasurer
Sara Dechter – Comprehensive Planning Manager for City of Flagstaff

Members of the Public

Laura Huenneke
Marc Della Rocca
Steve Sessions

Review of meeting notes from June 11, 2020 – no comments; notes accepted.

I. Presentations

Sarah Benatar: County Finance 101

Treasury is custodian of all public dollars; manages investment portfolios for the County. Difference between finance (strategy, an organization's focus) and treasury (cash management, short-term liquidity). Types of revenue for the County: mostly taxes, then licenses and permits, intergovernmental sources, charges for services, and grants and special revenue. 2019 property tax breakdown for DPTF: 47% goes to FUSD, 32% to Summit Fire Department. How to look up financial reports for the County. Unprecedented drops in the treasury yield due to COVID, and there will be lean times ahead.

Question: Does the County deal with casino revenue at all? Answer: The tribe is in charge of that.

Question: Does the County make any money off medical marijuana? Answer: Only from property taxes if they run a dispensary. There's still talk about how that type of business will be taxed.

Question: What kinds of impacts are we going to see from COVID next fiscal year? Answer: An example is Fire Departments couldn't receive any money from the CARES act, so they will have to come up with the money to cover all the personal protective equipment they've been needing from property taxes, so other areas will have to be cut, for example services might have to be reduced.

Question: Is there a chart that shows what taxes go to what specific funds? Answer: Yes it's on the website.

Question: If you get married in Flagstaff, some of the money goes to the County? Answer: Yes.

Question: Do we as a committee have any say over the money in the County's treasury? Answer: No but the committee can recommend projects.

Question: What percent of properties are rentals? Answer: Sarah can find out and let Melissa know.

Sara Dechter – Flagstaff Regional Plan 2030

DPTF falls within the Regional Plan boundary, which is the same as the Flagstaff Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO, now called MetroPlan) boundary. The Regional Plan boundary extends beyond the City of Flagstaff boundary and includes the portion of the County within the MPO. The Regional Plan is Flagstaff's highest-level plan. Deals with natural environment, built environment, and human environment. Want to create goals that support the character and sustainability of the area. Designates rural character and rural activity centers in the areas of the County that are just outside of the City limits. Lists goals for rural areas, such as maintaining their character. The Regional Plan is an official amendment to the County's Comprehensive Plan and the portion of the Regional Plan that covers the County is used in land use decisions. The Area Plan committee could use those goals as guideposts. Trails planning; the Area Plan could expand and/or refine trails. DPTF is rich in natural and cultural resources; the committee could consider in the Area Plan how those known and unknown resources could be protected.

Question: In the city the plan is adopted by voters, but for the County it does not have to go through voter approval? Answer: In the County it will be adopted by Board of Supervisors at a public hearing with a recommendation from the Planning and Zoning Commission, using the same process as the DPTF Area Plan: not on the ballot, but with much citizen input.

Question: Are these plans required by statute? Answer: It is required by the state of Arizona to have these plans for the city and County.

Question: Is this an enforceable type of document like our AP? Answer: It's similar to an AP. All these documents are reviewed during land use decision-making, and decisions must meet the policies.

Question: How will the high concentration of cultural resources in DPTF affect the Area Plan in terms of what our recommendations should be? Answer: The City has an ordinance to protect certain cultural resources, while the County does not. There are policies that guide that, however. An Area Plan can mimic those and back them up to help guide discretionary processes.

Question: Could the Horsemen Lodge building be designated as a cultural resource? Answer: Maybe. It hasn't been surveyed or analyzed to Melissa's knowledge.

Question: Could we put in the DPTF Area Plan that potentially cultural valuable resources must be taken into account? Answer: Flagstaff's plan says archaeologists must survey your property before you carry out certain construction activities, and then the locations of these places is recorded, even if they are not protected. An Area Plan can't make a new rule that would apply to building a new single family residence.

II. Key Presentation Points

County Finance 101

- The way the money comes into the County. Many people think that the only money that comes into the County is property taxes, which as she showed, is not correct. The different ways the County gets money, such as sales tax, licenses and permits, charges for services and grants is important for us to keep in mind.
- Taxes are collected in arrears, so taxes collected now are used a year later, so we're always behind on the collection of the taxes. Melissa has heard that there is some cushion built in, for example if the price of something goes up; she can ask Sarah Benatar for more info on that, but it is probably not specifically relevant to our process.
- Sales tax is a very important revenue source. There's a statewide sales tax, and both City of Flagstaff and the County add an additional tax on top of that. If DPTF had more commercial development, that would increase sales tax revenue for the County. This might not have any relevance to our AP.
- How will growth affect our fire department and other facilities?
- Important to find out how many long-term and vacation rentals there are in the County. If people do vacation rentals, should they be taxed at a different rate? Melissa will follow up with Sarah on that.

Flagstaff Regional Plan

- There's a statutory requirement saying that what is in the County Comprehensive Plan be evaluated when discretionary land use decisions are made by the Planning and Zoning Commission and Board of Supervisors. Area plans often go beyond what is in the County code. This is very important to the Area Plan because it does make a difference.
- Many trails end at the Flagstaff city limits – we should work to make that a well-coordinated effort so those trails don't end arbitrarily. FTI will help with that effort.
- What is the outcome we want at the end of this Area Plan process? The pyramid model was a good way to think about how it will fit into the planning landscape. What are our vision and our goals with the Area Plan? The pyramid would be a good way to frame our thinking going forward.

III. Work session: Visioning

This was our last "information gathering" meeting, and we're almost ready to move into the drafting of vision, goals, and policies.

The people who were going to talk about Horsemen Lodge asked to have their presentation delayed until a later date; staff is still in communication with them and will fit them in whenever they become available. Now that Horsemen Lodge is closed is the nonconforming land use still grandfathered in? The

County's nonconforming rules will apply to that property if the owners seek to reopen it. It will retain legal nonconforming status for 180 days after date of closure.

- Total DPTF planning area in acres (42,802): 68% federal, 31% private, 2% state. At some point we'll be looking into the future of the undeveloped portion of private land and what we want to see there.
- DPTF population has been experiencing a 3.3% growth rate, reaching 10,500 in 2020. Racial demographics are 80% white, 12% American Indian.
- Visioning: overall image of what the community wants to be now and in the future. The last Area Plan didn't have a vision statement.
- Demographic data will be taken into account.
- Reviewed lists of "What is dptf to you?", "What is important to you?", and "What are challenges and issues?" made in January.
 - o To challenges list, add zoning code violations, preserving cultural resources, and lighting (lighting already has a pretty strong ordinance)
- Build-out: how do we identify what lands are still available for further development?

Brainstorming: What does DPTF want to be in 20 years?

Natural resources, open space, and environment

- We value:
 - o biodiversity and cultural diversity of our region and of the DPTF area
 - o open space
 - o rural character
 - o the history of DPTF and northern Arizona
 - o the natural environment and its flora and fauna
- We will work with:
 - o each other
 - o public agencies
- We will work to:
 - o maintain large lots
 - o maintain and protect our rural lifestyle
- We will safeguard:
 - o our values so they can be passed along to future generations
 - o the natural ambience of DPTF as a rural community

Community character and values

- DPTF has a Design Review Overlay (DRO) currently; however, even within DPTF, some things may be appropriate in one part but not another, for example commercial centers.
- What does it mean that DPTF is a gateway into (or out of) Flagstaff? What does that represent in terms of community character? Or is it a gateway? The DRO is important in making a place more inviting.

Next month we'll look at 2 more categories: Land use, growth, development, and partnerships; and Transportation.

IV. Wrap-up

Next meeting: **August 13, 2020 via Zoom**

Topics: Coconino NF, Visioning continued, Activity centers and build out

Discussion concerning about making sure community is completely included in the comment period, due to pandemic limitations on meeting in groups. Not everyone is tech-savvy enough to manage virtual meetings; also, much valuable discussion and input comes from the public. County staff time is limited, and while there is some flexibility, the timeline can not necessarily be extended until the pandemic passes. Currently, the County is following strict guidelines in terms of opening back up to the public, and we have to follow those limitations. Some ideas: holding both virtual meetings and small, in-person meetings limited to 10 people; drive-through commenting. This discussion will continue at the August meeting.

V. Public comments
None

VI. Committee Final Thoughts
None