On Wednesday, May 17, 2017, the Boulder County Planning Commission held a regular afternoon session, convening at approximately 1:32 p.m. and adjourning at approximately 5:15 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Ann Goldfarb, Natalie Feinberg Lopez, Sam Fitch, Doug Young, Dan Hilton, Sean Stewart, Leah Martinsson

Commissioners Excused: Ben Blaugrund, Lieschen Gargano

Boulder County Staff Present: Kathy Parker (Assistant County Attorney), Kate Burke, Kim Sanchez, Anna Milner, Steven Giang, Nicole Wobus, Amy Oeth, George Gerstle (Transportation), Norrie Boyd (Boulder County Housing Authority), Dale Case.

Others: 5 – 10

MOTION: Sam Fitch MOVED that the Boulder County Planning Commission APPROVE the Minutes from April 19, 2017 as written.

SECOND: Sean Stewart

VOTE: Motion PASSED {6 to 0} Abstained: Leah Martinsson

Kim Sanchez, Chief Planner, provided 2 updates:

1) Oil and Gas update
2) Ben Blaugrund’s resignation from Planning Commission and upcoming BOCC appointment; BOCC appointed Gavin McMillan to replace Leah Martinsson on Planning Commission beginning in July when Leah moves.

**Planning Commission Training Series**

Kathy Parker, Assistant County Attorney, presented information on Planning Commission legal advice. The presentation is available at the below location:

http://bouldercountyco.suiteonemedia.com/web/Player.aspx?id=671&key=-1&mod=-1&mk=-1&nov=0

**Draft Regional Housing Plan**

Norrie Boyd, Boulder County Housing Division Manager, and Kathy Fedler, Housing and Community Investment Division Manager, presented an overview of the Draft Regional Housing Plan developed by the Boulder Regional Housing Partnership. Staff fielded questions and gathered input from Planning Commission which will inform the final plan.

Presentation topics included: affordable housing goals and priorities; demographic and other data on housing constraints and related community concerns in Boulder County; regional partnerships; affordable housing strategies recently introduced in Longmont; financial resources and goals; planning and policy recommendations; feedback from businesses; and the Regional Affordable Housing Plan Summit anticipated for September 2017.

Planning Commission asked for greater detail on the City of Longmont's incentive based approach on affordable housing. During their comprehensive plan update, the City of Longmont heard from developers that they would be able to accomplish more affordable housing development if there was more regulatory and process certainty. Some of the most notable innovations in Longmont’s new policies include changing the development code to allow by-right approvals of affordable housing developments in certain designated areas, and fee waivers to incentivize private development of affordable housing. The city is working on updating its development code to codify these processes.

Other topics discussed included:

- The importance of the regional jobs-housing imbalance, and that affordable housing goals will be moving targets until policies better address job growth and induce more involvement on the part of employers (e.g., dispersing job centers throughout the region, and linkage fees for commercial development);
- Possibilities for increasing density and rezoning areas as appropriate, and recognition that higher densities are welcomed in some areas;
- Employee housing for school districts and other focus areas;
- Why deed restricted properties lose affordability and should all assisted units be permanently affordable;
- Policy preferences around integration of affordable housing;
- Recognition that the county’s open space policies are part of the core values of the community, but they place limits on land available for development, presenting both opportunities for innovation (e.g., greater focus on redevelopment) as well as challenges;
- Prioritization of redevelopment (e.g., strip malls) over new development;
Mixed perspectives on whether annexation of municipal influence areas should be considered as a last resort for development;

Policies to protect the existing low income housing stock and the displacement of low income families in the region;

Promoting a living wage within the community;

Looking at opportunities to increase densities within Boulder by parcel (e.g., accessory dwelling units, etc.);

Ensuring that heavy industrial land use properties do not fall into a category of underutilized parcels that can be developed for affordable housing;

The percentage of home owners who are cost burdened;

Interest in innovative funding strategies like a Housing Trust Fund;

Tying affordable housing plans to sustainability and resiliency plans/efforts;

Adding the Housing Update as a part of the Boulder County Comprehensive Plan update work plan.

Boulder County Comprehensive Plan – Overview of Update Process and Proposed Changes to Document Template

Steven Giang, Boulder County Long Range Planner, presented a brief overview of limitations associated with the current set of Boulder County Comprehensive Plan (BCCP) documents and a proposed approach to carry out ongoing updates to the BCCP. Staff provided information on issues related to congruency of structure, design, and formatting across comprehensive plan sections. Staff provided a summary of the four process tracks for updating the BCCP: 1) consolidating the most current BCCP elements into a single document; 2) developing and applying a new document template/design; 3) improving the BCCP website to allow for easy access of information from the public; and 4) establishing a process for annual map updates.

The Planning Commission did not have feedback on the approach and process for the update but stated that this update was long overdue and that they appreciate staff’s efforts. One planning commissioner stated he was particularly interested in reviewing the schedule of element updates for when it is available. Steven explained that staff still needs to coordinate with specific departments to prioritize and ensure that they are able to allocate proper staff time for a comprehensive plan update.

Docket BVCP-15-0001: Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP) Update – CU South

The purpose of this BVCP study session regarding changes to the land use designation for CU South was to clarify information related to flood topics, describe Planning Commission’s role, discuss proposed guiding principles to inform future annexation, and discuss the amount of certainty that will come with later stages following land use designations. Nicole Wobus, Boulder County Long Range Planning Manager, and Phil Kleisler, City of Boulder Planner II, provided a presentation which was followed by discussion among the Planning Commissioners and questions for staff.

A staff recommendation for land use changes to the property was not released before the Planning Commission meeting, and therefore, could not be included in the staff report or presentation. However, during the Planning Commission discussion, the City Council and Planning Board staff report for the May 25 BVCP public hearing was posted and publicly available. At that point in the discussion, staff was able to share the locations of the recommended land use changes: Area 5 on the suitability diagram, which is most ecologically sensitive area on the property, would retain its current Open Space-Other designation and the rest of the property would change to Public.
Key themes and outcomes of the discussion include:

**Process and Decision Roles**

Topics addressed included the following:

- Planning Commission’s decision role ends with a decision about land use designations. The county would provide a detailed referral comment (i.e., non-binding) during the potential future annexation process.
- The recommended designations are general in nature, allowing for a range of possible development outcomes. More specific limitations on development would be part of an annexation agreement and intergovernmental agreement between the city and CU.
- A Planning Commissioner questioned whether the land use designation decision should be deferred to the next BVCP 5 year update so that it is not rushed and could receive the full amount of attention that comes with a 5 year update.

**Flood Topics**

City flood staff answered questions about the status of flood mitigation engineering and provided context around the “Option D” mitigation concept approved by Council in 2015. City staff went over the following:

- The South Boulder Creek Flood Mitigation Study looked at many potential flood mitigation concepts before arriving at Option D as the best option to pursue further.
- The Option D concept did originally assume the dam would be built to meet the state’s “high hazard” classification.
- As a high hazard dam, the dam would be designed so that it cannot fail catastrophically, and thus, it would provide more protection than what currently exists for adjacent neighborhoods.
- The city’s design standards (i.e., design for the 100 year flood event) are consistent with those recommended by the Urban Drainage and Flood Control District.
- The South Boulder Creek Flood Mitigation Study consultant estimated that Option D would have kept Hwy. 36 from overtopping in 2013. The 2013 flood was a lower intensity, long duration event, while Option D’s design is based on a shorter duration, more intense event. However, high volume is a characteristic of both, and volume is the key parameter for flood mitigation design.
- The process moving forward involves study and mitigation of groundwater and other impacts.

One Commissioner highlighted that dam safety is under the purview of the state and it is not the Planning Commission’s responsibility to ensure dam safety.

**Transportation**

A road from Table Mesa to 93 was not considered as an option, due to concerns from neighbors, issues with safety and CDOT’s intersection standards, and potential for this to become a cut-through. County staff also does not support it because it would result in an increase in vehicle miles traveled, there are safety risks, and it conflicts with policies to advance multi-modal transport.

**Guiding Principles**

A few Planning Commissioners commented that staff’s draft guiding principles are very detailed and appear to take a great deal of information and perspectives into consideration. It was hard for Planning Commissioners to suggest changes to them given the information available and the breadth of work that staff has completed.

Some positions expressed by individual Planning Commissioners included:
- A preference for more detailed land use designations to provide greater certainty about the future of development on the property, or at least providing guiding recommendations/principles with the land use designations.
- Interest in emphasizing the importance of using the property to serve flood mitigation purposes.
- An interest in exploring more options for flood mitigation (i.e., the current guiding principles focus too heavily on Option D).

ADJOURNED

Detailed information regarding these items, including maps and legal descriptions, is available for public examination at the Boulder County Land Use Department, 2045 13th St., Boulder, Colorado 303-441-3930.