

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
 ARAPAHOE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION  
 TUESDAY, JUNE 1, 2021**

<b>ATTENDANCE</b>	<p>A regular meeting of the Arapahoe County Planning Commission was called and held in accordance with the statutes of the State of Colorado and the Arapahoe County Land Development Code. The following Planning Commission members were in attendance:</p> <p>Kathryn Latsis, Chair; Jamie Wollman, Chair Pro-Tem; Rodney Brockelman, Randall Miller, Jane Rieck, Richard Sall and Lynn Sauve.</p> <p>Also present were: Robert Hill, Senior Asst. County Attorney; Jason Reynolds, Current Planning Program Manager; Larry Mugler, Planner/Project Specialist; Loretta Daniel, Long Range Planning Program Manager; Jan Yeckes, Planning Division Manager; and members of the public.</p>
<b>CALL TO ORDER</b>	<p>Ms. Latsis called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and noted a quorum of the Board was present. The meeting was held through the TEAMS platform and telephone call-in, as well as, being live-streamed for viewing. Mr. Reynolds explained the format of the meeting and said since there were no public hearing items on the agenda, there would be no public comments.</p>
<b>DISCLOSURE MATTERS</b>	<p>There were no Planning Commission member conflicts with the matters before them.</p>
<b>GENERAL BUSINESS ITEMS:</b>	
<b>APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES</b>	<p><b>The motion was made by Ms. Rieck and duly seconded by Ms. Wollman to accept the minutes from the May 18, 2021, Planning Commission meeting, as presented.</b></p> <p><b>The motion passed unanimously.</b></p>
<b>STUDY SESSION ITEMS:</b>	
<b>ITEM 1</b>	<p><b>WATKINS/BENNETT AREA VISION STUDY (WBAVS) FOR UNINCORPORATED ARAPAHOE COUNTY</b></p> <p>Ms. Daniel introduced the study session item and outlined the areas of the study to be reviewed during the meeting. She reported that the</p>

Planning Commission had previously attended a study session on the WBAVS, but would hear more about the progress of the study and would review the draft land use scenarios that had been developed for further consideration. Ms. Daniel stated there were several options for how to use the study, as follows; 1) It could be a free-standing study, 2) it could be further developed into a subarea plan, or 3) the study could be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan document. She explained that the study could serve not only as a land use guide for future development, but also as a tool for economic development within the area, depending on options selected. Ms. Daniel reported that the second “open house” for the study would be an on-line opportunity that would be open for several weeks to enable people to spend time reviewing the material on their own schedules and provide comments through one or more surveys. She reviewed the background for the study and the schedule for the study, divided into four phases.

The following topics were discussed: Demographics and growth data, community input received to date, development interests, limitations on increasing density and land use intensities, and constraints and opportunities such as groundwater supplies, transportation infrastructure, use of conservation easements, existing patterns of land use and zoning and subdivisions in the area, and scenic and natural features that may need protection.

It was noted that development plans in nearby areas could also influence the type of development pressures that we might see within unincorporated Arapahoe County. These could include land development types and patterns within the City of Aurora, the Town of Bennett, unincorporated Adams County, the Colorado Air and Space Port in Adams County, and Denver International Airport/Aerotropolis (a City and County of Denver holding within the overall boundary of Adams County). The desire to preserve agricultural uses and rural lifestyle within the east county would also be a factor that could influence development concepts and alternatives.

Ms. Daniel reviewed the various draft concepts developed from the work done so far, focusing on low growth, moderate growth and high growth options. She reviewed the “Pros” and “Cons” of each concept. She shared initial feedback on the concepts, provided by members of the Technical Committee (internal to Arapahoe County staff) and the Advisory Committee (public agency partners, service providers, and other external interests).

	<p>Mr. Brockelman announced that he was part of the advisory committee for the study and noted the wide range of comments expressed by a range of participants. He commended staff on their efforts to come up with a 25-year plan for the area.</p> <p>Mr. Miller agreed that there was a lot of information to absorb and understand.</p> <p>Ms. Rieck noted that she did not live in that area of the county and would rely on the opinions of Mr. Brockelman and Mr. Miller, who represented the east county. She noted the quandary between desires voiced by residents and property owners in the area and the demands on limited water resources.</p> <p>Mr. Sall noted that the information presented and the east county perspective highlighted very interesting issues.</p> <p>Ms. Sauve asked for additional explanation of the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) tool and for the reasons this would be beneficial rather than an “end run” around intended densities in the area.</p> <p>Ms. Daniel provided some additional explanation of the TDR process, referring back to the slide on “sending area” vs. “receiving area” (slide 44) for development rights/density.</p> <p>Mr. Mugler also noted how that could be used to help preserve agricultural and lower-density lands, which could be a benefit to the area, as well as, increasing density for other properties to create nodes of development.</p> <p>Ms. Daniel noted that the economic aspects of buying and selling development rights are one challenge to using this tool.</p> <p>Ms. Wollman noted that the concepts seemed to respect the need for buffers between communities and asked about the objections voiced by some participants.</p> <p>Mr. Mugler noted that the development pressures going north along I-25 had resulted in a more continuous pattern of development with few breaks. He said staff was responding to interests voiced for keeping rural communities distinct from each other; however, some people voiced concerns about how the buffer approach would impact their ability to use or develop their property. He explained that the TDR approach had potential for helping to achieve nodes of more</p>
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	<p>intensive development with agricultural preservation and community buffers still being possible.</p> <p>Ms. Latsis asked how staff would evaluate the high-growth vs. lower-growth scenarios.</p> <p>Mr. Mugler said he believed the results of the recent census would help with the decision-making and determining whether we are being overly optimistic with the high-growth concept.</p> <p>Ms. Latsis also asked about whether sustainability was being taken into account with respect to water resources, energy resources, and effects of a denser/compact type of development on helping to increase the efficiency in use of resources and infrastructure.</p> <p>Mr. Mugler acknowledged the need to evaluate sustainability in selecting a preferred concept.</p> <p>Ms. Latsis also asked how affordable housing factored into selecting a concept.</p> <p>Mr. Mugler responded that might need to be added to the pros and cons for each concept.</p> <p>Ms. Latsis asked whether any of this work overlapped other subarea plans or other development trends. She cited the recent land development application for Comanche Crossing that was abandoning the planned commercial and industrial uses and moving to a large-lot residential use due to lack of public services.</p> <p>Mr. Mugler noted that the subarea plans for Strasburg and Byers were becoming dated and also needed further evaluation; however, he stated those efforts would not be part of the WBAVS.</p> <p>Ms. Rieck said a buffer area between Sky Ranch and Prosper would be important and asked how many acres of land would be needed to provide that buffer.</p> <p>Ms. Daniel noted that both of the developments were very much suburban-scale residential with commercial services planned. She said some larger-lot subdivisions were already developed in the immediate area. She explained that the larger-lot residential development, and possibly some remaining agricultural parcels, would serve as the “buffer” and that there was a distance of only two or three miles between those two large-scale developments. Ms. Daniel summarized the next steps as part of Phase 2: Envision,</p>
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	Phase 3: Refine and Assess, and Phase 4: Confirm and Adopt. She reported the previously noted virtual community open house #2 was part of phase 2 and open house #3 would be part of Phase 4.
<b>ANNOUNCEMENTS AND QUESTIONS</b>	Ms. Yeckes thanked the Planning Commissioners for their time, attention, and work on the project.
<b>ADJOURNMENT</b>	There being no further business to come before the Planning Commission, the meeting was adjourned