

AGENDA

JOINT WORK SESSION CITY OF ASPEN PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSIONS & PITKIN COUNTY PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

**Plaza 1
530 E. Main
Aspen, Colorado**

May 12, 2009

5:00 PM WORKSESSION

1. Review of the Aspen Area Community Plan update
 - a. Review discussion from 4/28/09 – 10 – 20 min
 - b. Staff Presentation on Environmental Quality – 5 min
 - c. Resource Experts Presentation on Environmental Quality – 20 min
 - d. P&Z Discussion of Environmental Quality – 1 hour
 - e. Relationship to Growth Discussion – 10 min

7:00 PM ADJOURN MEETING

MEMORANDUM

TO: City of Aspen Planning and Zoning Commission; Pitkin
County Planning and Zoning Commission

FROM: Ben Gagnon, City Special Projects Planner
Jessica Garrow, City Long Range Planner
Ellen Sassano, County Long Range Planner

THRU: Chris Bendon, City Community Development Director
Cindy Houben, County Community Development Director

DATE OF MEMO: May 6, 2009

MEETING DATE: May 12, 2009

RE: AACP Update: Environmental Quality

RECAP FROM PREVIOUS MEETING: The April 28th joint P&Z meeting focused on the “Sustaining the Aspen Idea” chapter. A meeting summary is attached as Exhibit A. Staff has written revised Goal Statements and Action Items based on the P&Z’s comments. This is attached as Exhibit B.

REQUEST OF P&Zs: No formal action is requested at this time. This is a joint meeting with the City and County Planning and Zoning Commissions. There are two (2) requests of the P&Zs at this meeting.

1. Review the revised Goal Statements and Action Items for the Sustaining the Aspen Idea chapter. Do the revisions reflect the discussion? Is there anything to add or delete from the revised draft Goal Statements or Action Items?
2. Review and discuss the Environmental Quality chapter.

BACKGROUND: The Environment has been a topic in the AACP since 1993. In the 1993 and 2000 AACPs, the Environment was combined with Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails. Staff felt it was important to give the environment its own chapter in this AACP update because the environment has no more or less to do with Parks or Open Space than it does with Growth or Transportation. Additionally, the Environment has been an emerging area of focus in both the City and County as well as in the private and non-profit sectors for a number of years, so Staff felt it made sense to have its own, focused topic.

Because the Environment was combined with Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails in past plans, there are very few statements about the environment or environmental quality in the text of the 2000 plan. The statements in the plan are fairly general. For example:

- Intent Statement: “Support an environment that better the lives of all, preserves our natural beauty and provides opportunities and access for all to enjoy.”
- Philosophy Statement: “...the community must reflect the commitment to preserve our environmental and wildlife resources.”
- Goal Statement: “Protect and enhance the natural environment.”

However, there are three (3) specific Action items in the 2000 AACP that deal with the Environment. These are attached as Exhibit C and include a staff analysis. Overall, the Action Items are clearly worded, measurable, and directive. The one staff critique of these goals is that they do not relate well to the text in the chapter. In the update, better context for why the Action Items are included and how they relate to the Goal Statements will help this chapter.

DISCUSSION: As mentioned above, the environment has been broadened as a topic for this update to have its own chapter. This reflects the increasing importance of this topic to the community. Given all the work done in the area of Environmental Quality, and well as the feedback from the community during the public process, it is clear that Environmental Quality is something people value and care about. Staff believes this chapter is likely to be more Action Item heavy compared to other sections because there is strong and consistent agreement that caring for and improving Environmental Quality is important. Staff believes a Goal Statement like the 2000 “Protect and enhance the natural environment” no longer goes far enough for this chapter.

The draft chapter has been divided into the categories listed below. Each will have a “topic expert” at the meeting to give an overview of work being done in the area, to outline where they feel the “breakthroughs” in the topic are, and to answer any questions. These are the areas staff suggests the P&Zs focus their conversation, though the P&Zs should bring up other items as necessary.

- Carbon Emissions, Climate Change, and Greenhouse Gases
- Air Quality
- Waste and Recycling
- Energy Usage, Energy Efficiency, and Development
- Stormwater Runoff
- Water Quality/Conservation
- Environmental Stewardship

Staff has asked the topic experts to focus their presentations on the 2 or 3 things that need to happen in the next 10 years to ensure there is a “breakthrough” in the area of Environmental Quality. For example, under the topic of greenhouse gas emissions a Goal could be to “reduce community-wide greenhouse gas emissions by 30% by 2020.” Similarly, a Goal for stormwater runoff might be that “the amount of urban pollutants in stormwater runoff that discharges from the property located in the City of Aspen into the Roaring Fork River, Maroon Creek, and Castle Creek is greatly reduced.”

Pitkin County has a Strategic Plan that addresses many of the items in the AACP. Their Strategic Plan includes six goals related to the environment that may serve as good topics of discussion at the May 12th meeting. These are attached as Exhibit D.

The topic experts will present these overall goals at the May 12th meeting. They will also be prepared to outline specific Action Items that could help implement those goals. It is up to the P&Zs to determine which goals and topics should be included in the updated AACP.

The State of the Aspen Area includes an impressive list of environmental quality projects undertaken since 2000. The presentations at the meeting will help illustrate the next steps that can help further the Environmental Quality in the Aspen Area.

Materials to Review: If you are missing any of these items, please contact Jessica Garrow or Ellen Sassano.

- 2000 AACP: Parks, Open Space, & the Environment Chapter
- State of the Aspen Area: Environmental Quality
- Small Group Meeting Synthesis: Pages 23 – 25 and Page 35
- Survey Results: Questions 9, 16, 17, 91, 92; Colored Survey Tables
- Keypad Results: Questions 14 – 17
- Draft AACP Update: Environmental Quality

ATTACHMENTS:

Exhibit A: Meeting Summary from 4/28 discussion on Aspen Idea

Exhibit B: Revised Aspen Idea Goal Statements and Action Items

Exhibit C: List of 2000 AACP Action Items related to Environmental Quality

Exhibit D: Pitkin County Strategic Plan related to Environmental Quality

Summary of Joint Planning and Zoning Commissions Meeting
Sister Cities Room / April 28, 2009

The following is not intended to serve as minutes of the 4287/09 meeting, but to summarize areas of consensus and discussion on major issues. The topic was Sustaining the Aspen Idea.

Arts and Cultural Facilities

We should clarify that question in the Community Survey that asked whether we should “providing assurances for adequate facilities.” I don’t think anyone knows what that means and we need to clarify that.

What criteria should be evaluated when it comes to future development or expansion of an arts, cultural and educational facility? In other words, “if there is an expansion, what do we get back?” and “Who does it serve?” Suggested criteria included:

- Integration and permeation of the community by the arts and the physical environment.
- Reaching out, having art on the streets, music on the streets, etc. Push art more into the community rather than getting the community to come to an arts facility. The idea of “art in unexpected places” is a great example of that.
- A sense of belonging. People feel a little removed and separated from it all. Spirit is lacking is because the town has become more stratified.
- Real locals passes and inclusion in all the elements is very important.
- There is a strong need for more community space.
- Do all sorts of cool green things, integrate the schools into ‘green’ learning.
- Make the buildings cool and unique places that are clearly part of the public realm, relating indoors to outdoors.
- Integration is not just physically getting attendees, but also the social-economic issues. We need equal offerings at equal values.
- Get more locals involved in these activities. Needs to be less stratification. The affordability aspect is important.

A Council on the Arts?

Is there more interest in getting a council created again relating to the arts?

If you have one of these commissions, you need to have a third party facilitator.

If there is a commission created it is crucial that the group really capitalizes on using email notifications. It’s happened so many times to me that if I hadn’t received a reminder, notification, I would have missed out.

ACRA is trying to broaden the marketing by targeting different age levels and backgrounds to advertise Aspen in a comprehensive manner. The idea of having an Arts Council again would be a big help to coordinate these efforts. The SkiCo does an incredible job digitally including everyone with what is going on. They email you when opportunities arise.

Mind, Body, Spirit

As we move along, we cannot address mind, body, and spirit as individual concepts. They need to be a collaborative. How can our new plan be more effective towards this trilogy?

Link to Managing Growth

One thing to remember is how any of these improvements could be tied to a future rise in population and how our thinking now could change. Another issue is the traffic one which might impact how these facilities are implemented.

Goals and Action Items

Staff will present revised wording for goals and action items to be presented on 5/12.

Aspen Idea Revised Goal Statements and Action items

Goal Statements

A sustained cultivation of the arts and culture is a core element of the Aspen Area's identity -- enriching the quality of life for the Aspen community, reinforcing its national and international profile and strengthening its economy.

Through collaboration, local non-profit groups and businesses can illustrate how they are honoring and carrying forward the Aspen Idea through dramatically improved outreach to those who live, work or play in the Aspen Area.

As mind, body and spirit are fully integrated parts of a whole and balanced person, local non-profits and businesses have an opportunity to integrate their offerings together to reflect the Aspen Idea. This approach can rebuild local enthusiasm for the Aspen Idea, provide common ground to reduce unintended stratification in the community and diversify our visitor base.

Aspen at its best represents a place of education, personal improvement and new experience.

The future potential expansion or development of arts and cultural facilities should:

- ✓ Provide multi-purpose space for the Aspen Area community;
- ✓ Integrate the wide range of people who live, work and play in the Aspen Area;
- ✓ Reach outside the facility and into the public realm, making art visible in the community;
- ✓ Facilitate meaningful and affordable local participation and local talent;
- ✓ Emphasize reuseable materials and renewable energy;
- ✓ Collaborate with other non-profit groups to broaden the purpose of public space.

Sustaining the Aspen Idea should be a goal that is shared by local governments as well as a wide range of local organizations. Public-private partnerships can lead to a myriad of opportunities that could strengthen the Aspen Idea.

Action Items

Local non-profit organizations should explore reconvening a local Council on the Arts to promote collaboration and mutual support between arts and cultural organizations. The mission of such a Council on the Arts could include methods to better integrate the wide range of people who live, visit and play in the Aspen Area, to establish a more powerful web-based "information outreach and clearinghouse," to explore shared housing opportunities for visiting artists and other mutually beneficial purposes.

Local non-profits and businesses should explore integrating their offerings into a package of activities and experiences that reflect the balance of mind, body and spirit, clearly carrying forward the unique heritage of the Aspen Idea.

Explore options for the housing of visiting artists to assist local non-profit organizations in their effort to produce special events. Options include an ADU database available to non-profit groups.

Propose amendments to the City Land Use Code to include new criteria for the development of expansion of Arts, Cultural and Educational facilities.

2000 AACP Action Items: Environment

This chart shows 2000 action items, current status and an analysis on whether the action item was effectively stated.

<u>2000 Action Item</u>	<u>Status Update</u>	<u>Effectiveness of Action Item</u>
<p>16. Ecological Bill of Rights</p> <p>Revisit the Ecological Bill of Rights. Develop a specific action plan for each “Right” to reflect the Bill of Rights.</p>	<p><i>Examined, Partially Completed.</i></p> <p>The Ecological Bill of Rights was adopted by City Council. A “Canary Action Plan” was also adopted by City Council and implementation is underway. Action plans for each EBOR item are not in place.</p>	<p><i>Good</i></p> <p>This is a clearly stated goal that can be easily measured. It would be helpful to have better context on why the Ecological Bill of Rights was chosen.</p>
<p>32. Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle</p> <p>Promote the concept of “Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle” as a way to protect our environment and extend the life of the Pitkin County Landfill.</p>	<p><i>Ongoing.</i></p> <p>The City is in the process of implementing various environmental programs including the Zgreen Program which certifies green businesses and events, and instituting new building standards for commercial buildings. The City's comprehensive recycling ordinance has significantly increased recycling, but there is potential for other increases in recycling. Council agreed to the Canary Initiative recommendation to join the "2030 Challenge" and further reduce building energy use. According to the Landfill staff, at current filling rates the landfill is expected to reach capacity between 2033 and 2038.</p>	<p><i>Very Good</i></p> <p>This is a clearly stated goal that can be implemented in a number of ways. It is descriptive without being overly prescriptive. This is an action item that has some flexibility over time.</p>
<p>33. De-Icing Alternatives</p> <p>Study the impact of the use of de-icing applications on vegetation and water quality. Explore alternatives to using chemicals or establish a policy of a dilution ratio to minimize the impacts of de-icing and dust abatement agents such as Magnesium Chloride or other chemicals.</p>	<p><i>Done.</i></p> <p>CAST – The Colorado Association of Ski Towns – studied the environmental and health impacts of Magnesium Chloride in coordination with the City of Aspen. The City Council directed staff to discontinue use of Magnesium Chloride for direct use on roadways and to use sand minimally consistent with safety. The City experimented with alternative deicers, which were found to be expensive so discontinued. The city uses biodegradable summer dust control agents.</p>	<p><i>Very Good</i></p> <p>This is a clearly stated goal. It outlines a number of alternatives and is very directive. It would be helpful to have better context on why this was included as an action item.</p>

Pitkin County Strategic Plan goals

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION - County Strategic Plan

Strategic Statement: Pitkin County will preserve and protect the integrity of the Roaring Fork watershed and all of its natural resources. Ecological health will be a priority in our decision making and we will advocate its importance in the decision making of others.

ACTION ITEMS

Category: Protection of Water Quantity & Quality

Goal 1: Preserve and protect watershed integrity and water availability and sustainability. Within legal and economic constraints, independently acquire land, conservation easements and water rights. Where prudent, utilize County water rights to enhance instream flows. Support studies designed to quantify the Roaring Fork watershed's environmental and recreational non-consumptive water use needs, as well as the economic value of the non-consumptive use of water to support more informed decision making.

Goal 2: Ensure that authorized development is sustainable and does not exceed the "carrying capacity" of the land, as defined by the County's land use policies. Make ecological health a priority when evaluating the need for further development. Require new and existing development to avoid, or fully mitigate for adverse environmental impacts.

Category: Protection of Air Quality; Promotion of Energy Efficiencies

Goal 1: Through our own actions, including procurements, as well as in County policies and regulations, make the control, prevention, and abatement of air pollution a priority.

Goal 2: Through our own actions, including procurements, as well as in County policies and regulations, promote the use of renewable and efficient energy, recycling, and solid and hazardous waste reduction, whenever feasible.

Category: Open Space and Habitat Preservation and Restoration

Goal 1: Preserve and protect open space and trails and important wildlife habitat. Within legal and economic constraints, independently acquire land, conservation easements and water rights to further this effort.

Category: Regional Activism on Environmental Issues

Goal 1: Aggressively participate in local, regional and statewide organizations, as well as statutory, regulatory and contractual initiatives (e.g., intergovernmental agreements) to pursue cooperative solutions to water-related issues and land management issues, and so as to have the greatest influence on environmental matters of key concern.