

Utah Quality Growth Commission Meeting

Wednesday, March 28, 2007, 11:00 AM

Zermatt Resort

Midway, Utah

Agenda

Commission Members Attending

Dan Lofgren, Commission Chairman
Carlton Christensen, Commission Vice
Chairman
Jaren Davis Commission, Vice Chairman
Mike Kohler
Flint Richards
Mike Styler
Leonard Blackham
Brad Barber
David Allen
Lewis Billings
Darrell Smith

Larry Ellertson, Utah County
Sally Elliot, Summit County

Staff Attending

John Bennett
Mike Hansen
Kevin Daniels

Guests Attending

Lt. Governor Gary Herbert
Janice Jardine, Salt Lake City Council
Doug Clark, GOED
Nicole Gagstetter, TNC
Shauna Kerr, TPL
Phillip Mathews, Lt. Governors Office
Steve Farrell, Wasatch County Council

New Commissioners Attending

Justin Allen, Centerville City
Laraine Swenson, Logan City

Chairman Dan Lofgren conducted the meeting

1—Welcome and introductions – 5 minutes

Introduce new members present (if any)

Laraine Swenson, Larry Ellertson, Sally Elliot, Justin Davis were introduced to the other members of the commission. They will take office on April 15, 2007. At that time, several sitting commissioners will be leaving having completed eight years.

2—Welcome to Wasatch County, Mike Kohler, 5 minutes

Mike Kohler deferred to his colleague Steve Farrell, Who welcomed the commission and made a public comment about planning assistance provided by the Commission.

3—Public Comments--5 minutes

Council Member Steve Farrell of Wasatch County discussed the Critical Lands Planning Grant they received from the Commission last year. He indicated that they are trying to craft a cooperative plan with all the cities and the county to identify and preserve some of the valley floor locations and other critical lands. The Commission's investment of about \$18,000 was leveraged into about \$65,000 in funds for the project. The county contracted with the Center for Greenspace Design to conduct several public workshops, and they are now working with planning commissions and city councils to craft a unified set of ordinances for critical land preservation. Councilman Farrell indicated that the effort has already born fruit in helping to get the various cities and the county to work together. He felt that alone made the effort

worthwhile. He thanked the commission for the help. Mike Kohler echoed his sentiments, and welcomed everyone to the county.

4— Approval of Minutes from February 28, 2007 Meeting

ACTION ITEM: Approve February meeting minutes—5 minutes

David Allen moved to approve the minute with one correction. Mike Kohler seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

5—Discussion of Utah Quality Growth Communities, Dan Lofgren 20 minutes

Dan Lofgren began the discussion of this item by explaining that the Quality Growth Act gives the commission several charges. One is to administer the LeRay McAllister Fund, another was to define a “Quality Growth Area.” The Commission took up that charge, and decided that they would define a Quality Growth Area by an attempt to align state spending for infrastructure with the principles of Quality Growth as adopted by the commission. This was the genesis of the Quality Growth Communities program. Mr. Lofgren stated that the State is the single largest funder of activities and infrastructure related to responding to growth. These activities include planning, transportation, water, housing and other infrastructure. He indicated that since the state has adopted, through the Commission, principles of Quality Growth, then it makes sense that those principles should help determine how the state’s infrastructure and planning funds are spent. As intuitive as that idea might seem, it is not that simple. There are numerous boards and commissions that control various pots of money that is used to address infrastructure needs. Each of these boards or commissions was formed with its own charge from the legislature, and its own set of imperatives, and with very little inclination to surrender control of their funds to someone else.

The commission visited these boards and commissions to discuss this idea, and found that most were anxious to cooperate. Working with these boards and commissions we began to assemble a bundle of benefits. Each group had its own set of rules, and priorities, but several found ways to help in this effort by offering incentives for cities, or other groups, which were designated as Quality Growth Communities. About 50 communities were designated in the first round, in 2004.

Incentives included higher scores for CDBG funds, preferred interest rates for loans, and other similar priorities.

The Commission set the bar quite high. Communities had to incorporate quality growth planning in their general plans to be designated. But the Commission also allowed communities to get provisional designation if they agreed to work on the planning changes over a three year period.

We lost some momentum because some communities felt that the benefits were not worth the effort. They liked being designated, but the benefits were not sufficient to sustain the level of effort necessary.

We did not find anyone who felt uncomfortable with the direction the program was taking, but many communities felt that the incentives were not sufficient to warrant the extra effort.

When we began this effort, we got attention from other states and communities across the country. The concept is still valid, but the new commission will need to decide how to promote it. If this is going to succeed in the future, we need to have the support of government leaders. We will need to resell the program. We need the governor, legislators and others to get onboard.

Mr. Lofgren indicated that he believes this program can be more important than anything else the Commission may do if it can be revitalized.

Jaren Davis commented that he feels like communities are beginning to recognize the intrinsic value of good planning, and we may get more mileage out of the simple intrinsic value of the program than we did before.

David Allen indicated that we are really talking about hundreds of millions of dollars that the state is spending to address growth. He felt that if we could move that just 5% we could have a huge impact on the future of our state. He related that he recently saw a new freeway off ramp open, and in just six months, numerous new developments had sprung up. He indicated that the development wasn't necessarily a bad thing, but that he hoped some thought, or principles had gone into deciding where the off ramp would be located and what type of development would occur around it. This opportunity to get the state and local governments to agree on principles of development is very valuable.

He went on to suggest that when we had started this effort, we tried to do it without involving the legislature. This had not been effective, and so we would likely need to have legislative and executive buy off on this issue before we move forward on it. Dan Lofgren reminded commissioners that we had had the support of Governor Walker, but that her executive order had to be modified because the legislature indicated that she did not have the authority to order cooperation on this issue without it being mentioned in legislation.

Brad Barber indicated that we will likely need the legislature to make the program fly. Mayor Smith encouraged the Commission to work with the Governor and the legislature on this issue.

Carlton Christensen suggested that we may want to let the legislature determine how to provide incentives.

Mayor Smith asked staff to survey both participants and funders to see who has used the incentives, and done the planning and what factors lead to that. We should promote our successes. Staff agreed to do that survey.

Commissioners indicated that it would be nice to identify all the benefits both direct and indirect. The idea is that good planning will save money in the future whether or not it saves money right now because of some incentive.

The commissioners lamented the fact that staff resources limit the ability to identify and publicize the successes. They indicated that resources ought to allow for a full-time quality growth communities coordinator.

Jaren challenged the new commission to take this program to the next level.

LUNCH: Provided by Zermatt Resort---Presentation on the resort by Jaren Davis—20 Minutes

Jaren Davis introduced Zermatt General Manager. Resort opened September 2006. Zermatt is a world class destination and resort. Mr. Davis and the general manager explained the resort to the commission. They explained that the resort is ahead of schedule and seems to be doing well. They showed a film describing the resort and entertained questions.

6—Critical Lands Subcommittee Report, Discussion of proposed changes to rating and ranking system, and timeline for next funding round, David Allen, 20 minutes

ACTION ITEM: Approval of Timeline and Changes

John Bennett explained the material in the packet supplied to commissioners. He directed them to the proposed schedule, and to the new checklist. Based on discussions in the February meeting, Mr. Bennett indicated that the following documents would be required at the time of the full application being submitted: An appraisal, an option or purchase agreement, letters of support, identified and agreed upon easement holder, identified matching funds. There are other requirements on the checklist, but these are the changes.

Shauna Kerr of the Trust for Public Land indicated that some landowners might worry if all the information in an option were made public. The commission agreed to accept a sworn statement or affidavit that an option exists and disclosing the basic financial details.

Mayor Billings suggested that we need to ensure a consistent timing going forward so that if some of these applicants can't meet this requirement, they know when to come back. Staff indicated that the dates could change but we could state that the request for proposals will always go out on the first Monday in April.

The Commission also discussed whether a full-blown appraisal was necessary. After much discussion, the commission agreed to accept a letter of value from an appraiser instead if that is necessary to meet the requirements of the federal process.

David Allen moved, and Brad Barber seconded, that we accept the checklist with two changes. First we have an appraisal, or a letter of opinion from a certified appraiser at the time of the full application. If a letter is submitted, then a full appraisal will be required prior to funding. Further more, if the applicant uses a letter of opinion, and the appraisal goes up, the applicant is responsible for the difference. If the appraisal goes down by more than 10% then we will reconsider our participation in the project, and reduce our funding or reevaluate all the projects. The result may be that we do not fund the project at all in this round. Second, we need to have a signed verification of purchase agreement at the time the full application is submitted.

The commission accepted the motion unanimously.

Mayor Smith moved approval of the application timeline with the changes to the application documents as noted above. Carlton Christensen seconded the motion. It was approved unanimously.

7— Legislative issues and funding, John Bennett--20 minutes

Mr. Bennett introduced a list of legislative actions that the Commission should take during the coming year to promote the Commission. He suggested that regular visits each month should take place. Mike Styler suggested traveling around the state to make these visits. It was also suggested that the Commission could take its meetings on the road and invite legislators to attend. It was also suggested that we see if legislators would like to visit McAllister Projects during the August interim. Lewis Billings suggested that we try to meet with leadership in their offices.

8—Transition information and issues, John Bennett, 10 minutes

There was suggestion that the new chair and the old chair go to the Governor and the legislative leadership and ask for additional staff. Dan Lofgren accepted this charge and asked Brad Barber and Lewis Billings to join him and the new chair.

9—Presentation honoring Members being replaced on the Commission—Dan Lofgren, with remarks by Lt. Governor Gary Herbert, 20 minutes.

Lt. Governor Herbert spoke to the commission and honored the departing members. He presented each of the departing members with a picture and thanked them, on behalf of the Governor, for their service on

the commission. He reminded them of the history of the commission, and the fact that both he and Governor Huntsman had served on the Commission. He reminded commissioners of the growth taking place in Utah, and indicated that the commission's work was more important now than it has ever been.

10--Administrative Matters

Next meeting at the State Capitol

IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, INDIVIDUALS NEEDING SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS (*INCLUDING AUXILIARY COMMUNICATIVE AIDS AND SERVICES*) DURING THIS MEETING SHOULD NOTIFY JOHN BENNETT, GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF PLANNING AND BUDGET AT 538-1027, AT LEAST THREE DAYS PRIOR TO THE MEETING.