SCCC May 16, 2023 Minutes Final

The meeting was held on zoom courtesy of David Chase, Vice President, presiding.

Board members present: David Chase, Sierra Flanigan, Chelsea Brundige, Chris Collins, Judy Frey, Jen Rupert, Judy Lovins, Jill Sabella

Guests present: Steve Child, Jeffrey Woodruff

CONSENT AGENDA: Minutes of March meeting and Treasurer’s Report.

The Treasurer’s Report of May 15, 2023 shows $33,082.79 in the Unrestricted Funds account, $9,490.51 in the restricted water account, for a total of $42,573.26. There was $600 income from the annual BOCC Caucus funding, and $20.17 expense from the IONOS Domain change.

Chelsea made a motion to approve and Jen seconded. All were in favor.

DARK SKIES INITIATIVE: Progress Report

David said Martha has submitted a letter to local papers on our Caucus’ Dark Skies Initiative, as well as letters received from local institutions and individuals, and that we will have a dark sky event next year. Steve said he thought we should proceed with community activities relating to Dark Skies. Judy Frey offered to do a smaller event- a sky watching event - in a convenient place possibly mid-September when there is no moon.

Sierra said she and Martha were working on content on Dark Skies for the Caucus website, and also looking for an organization to give compensation and obligation to support the Dark Skies Initiative.

MASTER PLAN REVIEW by PTIKIN COUNTY P&Z on May 2

David commented that the review went well before the P&Z on May 2. The Master Plan committee will complete all of P&Z’s recommended changes, then make recommendations to the full Caucus board at the June meeting, and will get the final Master Plan back to Ellen Sassano. The P&Z review board was very complimentary to the Caucus for it’s leadership in many areas, especially TDR’s and the Dark Skies Initiative.

There was discussion on whether the plan is “friendly” enough, if we need to add a “dear neighbors” letter. Judy Frey said it’s impressive the way it is and is well integrated. Steve suggested some wording could be tweaked to make it more friendly. Discussion followed on the Special Events coverage and that it needed some clarification. The allowable three-events per year on private land is allowed by the County and doesn’t need approval, but the Special Events Venues, which are larger and have to be approved case by case by the County needs more clarification since that designation is now under the Incompatable category in the Master Plan.

Jeffrey added that Susanne Wolff is the P&Z expert and approval can still be given to the Master Plan if no significant changes are made, but that the revised plan should come back to the Board if there are significant changes. Chris added that its the number of people at an event that determines which special event category an event falls under.

COUNTY COMMISSIONER DISTRICTS

Steve discussed the redistricting process which is still under way with the second hearing May 16, a third and final hearing June 28. The final deadline for this redistricting is September 30. Of the three options given initially by the County (to balance populations in the 5 districts after the 2020 census within 5% of each other) Steve did not like any of them because they split up the Caucuses and would have a huge impact on our particular valley. Steve worked on a 4th option which he believes would balance out the population but keep in tact the coherency of each district better than the other plans and keep our caucus area in tact, which also means keeping our watershed in our caucus district. Steve also felt that a district is not as well represented if that area’s commissioner lives in another district and that the reasoning behind his adjustments was so that Capitol Creek would not be chopped into three commissioner districts. He felt his proposal wouldn’t fracture neighborhoods as much as other proposals. Commissioner candidates must live in the districts they represent but all voters select the commissioners. The other commissioners favored other plans because of their simplicity and liked the idea of combining urban and rural. Steve said the Caucus members could send comments to the County for the next hearing.

COLORADO ZONING LAWS

Jeffrey spoke on the two Colorado Zoning Laws that were before the state legislature. State Bill 23-213 which concerned making multi-family housing in single-family housing areas, thereby increasing housing and also number of people died in committee but will be back in 2023 or 2024 in another format and will require municipalities to address the housing gap. The State Bill 23-1255 has yet to go to Gov. Polis’ desk and will be revisited. Steve said the Commissioners will keep working on them and will be involved to make 213 better and will revised 1255. At present 1255 would destroy all land use controls.

Jeffrey commented that neither bill addressed the water scarcity and that there are inadequate waste systems, especially related to climate emergencies, that need to be addressed. Steve added that if 1255 were passed with the climate crisis we are in we would be in a state of emergency, and Jeffrey said the burden would fall on the counties, not the state.

COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Sierra reported on the Advisory Committee’s final decision to approve County-wide urban house size at 9,250 sf and 8750 sf outside urban. The range of proposed sizes was from 15,000 to 5750 so the 9250 sf was middle ground. The committee respects caucuses recommendations for smaller sf, and there are other factors to mitigate house size as well as incentives to build small homes.

Sierra also asked about St. Benedict’s Monastery and if a historic designation might mean that the existing historic buildings cannot be taken down.

David Chase reported that there is a 501-c-3 organization recently formed to preserve the monastery and it’s values and lands in perpetuity using conservation easements. A thorough appraisal will be made of all the monastery properties.

Meeting was adjourned.