SCCC Minutes Draft 1 June 20, 2023

Meeting was held in person at the Old Snowmass Fire House and on zoom

Board members present: Ned Andrrews, Chris Collins, David Chase, Johno McBride, Judy Hill Lovins, Michael Kinsley, Judy Frey, Jen Rupert, Jill Sabella

Board members present on zoom: Sierra Flanigan, Helene Slansky, Pete McBride, Molly Child

Guests: Steve Child, Dwight Maurin, Chris Davenport, Martha Ferguson, Amy Burn, Forest Thomas, Sharon Caulfield

CONSENT AGENDA

The Treasurer’s Report showed $33.109.95 in the Unrestricted Funds account, $9,490.51 in the Restricted Water studies account, for a total of $42.600.46. The income was $27.16 from AmazonSmile, and there were no expenses.

Michael moved to approve the Treasurer’s Report and the May, 2023 Minutes. David seconded. The May Minutes will be posted on the Caucus website.

COUNTY COMMISSIONER DISTRICTS

Steve Child spoke on the tentative approval of his #6 option for the redistricting of the Commissioner Districts, which is being done because of the 2020 Census. The different options at play were reviewed at the May Caucus meeting, and Steve persevered on designing an option which he felt would be best at keeping neighborhood representation and with commissioners living in or close to the neighborhood they represent. Steve felt all along that this was the most important factor in the redistricting and mapping. In brief, Steve’s plan would move part of the Snowmass Club into another district, moved some areas around the east side Aspen near Highlands into other districts, but keep our district very much the same and our Caucus area intact. The final approval of the redistricting option will be voted on by the Commissioners on June 28th.

AMENDMENTS TO MASTER PLAN PROPOSED BY PITKIN COUNTY P&Z

The Caucus’ Master Plan was approved in November 2022 by the Board and sent to the County P&Z where it was considered at their May 4, 2023 meeting and approved with three suggested amendments. Two of these suggestions amendments had to do with plumbing verbiage and one with the Special Events Venue in the category of “Incompatible with our rural character and natural environment”. Whereas a Special Events permit gives every landowner up to three events per year on each piece of land, a Special Events Venue must be applied for through the P&Z and the County allows a special number of unlimited, general events over multiple years. For example events of the Ski Corp and T Lazy 7 are Special Events Venues . Currently there are no Special Event Venues in Capitol Creek Valley.

There was discussion that a non-profit event should be considered a commercial event and be in the Special Event category, not the Venue category and that there still needs to be a map overlay for Land Use, Public Notices, and then to the Board of Commissioners for public input. If the Board allows Venues, the revision has to be approved by the BOCC.

Discussion followed that Venues in the “Incompatible” column does not say they are forbidden, so someone in Capitol Creek valley apply to the County and ask for approval for a Venue - if there are more than three events per year, which could overrule the Master Plan.

Helene moved to approve the P&Z amendments of the MP. Johno seconded.

Dwight spoke about the Maurin family concerns and that he likes the Master Plan as is. He explained they had to treat several spruce trees in the meadow where their events are held and had pheromone packs stapled to trees to protect them from infestations, and that they have to move the event area for each event so that the ground can recuperate between events. These events, normally two per year, pay their taxes.

There was discussion that the Venues save greatly on paperwork process and give more flexibility in scheduling. rather than an application for each and every event and that a “venue” is really about location and process, for a commercial activity.

Steve commented that the application paperwork needs to be simplified especially if its for essentially the same event and that there be a request for an amendment to the Land Use code to:

1. to change the rules for a 3/year period
2. and Venues be permitted with a limited number of events.

Discussion followed that three events/year are permissible but that the Venue permit would allow more than three and that scope and scale/size of Venue events would effect our valley with things like large numbers of buses ferrying people to event locations. Aspen has become so expensive that locations like our valley are being considered, and that in the future, if more are allowed, the impact could become negative and difficult to reverse and that the Board needs more time to discuss this issue - like the number of events, the scale, size and frequency, and state what outcome we want and set some guardrails.

It was discussed that the McCabe and Maurin ranches should continue to do what they currently are doing, and that the Special Events Venue as defined should remain in the “Incompatible” column but the paperwork for Special Events needs to be simplified. and be petitioned to the Community Development and P&Z to change the protocol, have the application process simplified to help the McCabe and Maurin ranches.

Jen moved to defer approval of the Master Plan with the amendments as suggested by the P&Z, in order to allow more time for discussion. Helene, who had made the motion before the Board, did not accept the competing motion, and called for a vote on her motion. The Chair asked for a show of hands by those in favor of the motion to approve the Master Plan as amended by the P&Z. Ten members voted in favor of the motion, three against with one member absent. The Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus approved the area Master Plan as amended by the P&Z.

Michael made a motion that we request the County to 1. simplify and streamline special event applications, and 2. that they develop regulations that result in special events that are compatible with the character of the SnoCap Caucus as reflected in the Master Plan Introduction. The Caucus will suggest parameters and criteria for those special event regulations. Jill seconded the motion. 13 voted in favor.

DARK SKIES

Martha has sent op-ed letters to the local papers and Sierra has sent letters to the Commissioners to inform the valley about Dark Skies and our involvement in getting designated a Dark Skies community. Sierra will be contacting the local libraries and Chambers of Commerce about leaving brochures with further information and will be asking for letters of support from local organizations. They are working with Devon on putting together a Dark Skies webpage on the caucus website.

Martha said we need programs such as this for the educational awareness component of Dark Skies participation. Pete plans to write a piece for the local op-eds to keep people aware.

Martha said the caucus needs to have a sky quality light meter to take biannual light readings as required, and that there needs to be assurance that this involvement will keep going even when the Board changes with annual elections.

Pete made a motion to purchase a light meter, as well as a decibel meter. Michael seconded.

Sierra commented that the County is working to integrate these principles of Dark Skies into the County lighting code.

Meeting was adjourned.