

Meeting Notes
2013 Comprehensive Plan Update Steering Committee
Town Hall Meeting
August 14, 2013

The 2013 Comprehensive Plan Update Steering Committee Town Hall meeting was held at the Sun Valley Opera House on August 14, 2013.

Call to order

Chairperson Peter Palmedo called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

Committee Present: Doug Brown, John Calvert, John Carver, Steve Cannon, Peter Hendricks, David Holmes, Nancy Humphrey, Wally Huffman, William Merizon, Peter Palmedo, Tim Silva, Cris Thiessen, Susan Tucker, Liz Warrick, Paul Willis, Marlene Lowry, Pat McMahon, Daniel Olmstead.

Also Present: Mayor Dewayne Briscoe, City Administrator Susan Robertson, Community Development Director Mark Hofman, Community Development Planning Technician and Associate Planner Isabel Lui.

Approximately 70 people were present at the Town Hall meeting.

Mayor Briscoe made a welcoming address to the audience to start the Town Hall meeting.

Chairman Palmedo gave a brief overview of the Sun Valley Comprehensive Plan Update Steering Committee, discussed the process to date and then introduced the individual Steering Committee members.

The public input questions then followed. Mark Hofman gave instruction to the participants on how to use the voting paddles. The series of questions started with some basic demographic questions to get the participants used to using the keypads, followed by a series of questions regarding various issues of importance to the update of the Comprehensive Plan. Hofman also explained the Comprehensive Plan Update process. He said that after the gathering of public input, the Steering Committee will form a recommendation on how the Comprehensive Plan shall be amended. The recommendation will then go to the Planning & Zoning Commission and the City Council for formal public hearings.

Results of the voting on each of the public input questions will be made available on the City's website at www.sunvalley.govoffice.com.

The following is a summary of key questions and comments raised during the Town Hall meeting.

On the question "What are the two most important reasons you live in the Sun Valley area?"

- As one of her answers, Karen Reinheimer selected "Other" and said that she lives in the Sun Valley area because of its wildlife.

On the question "Overall, how would you rate the vitality of the Sun Valley community?"

- Mark Hofman clarified that community is not defined within the question and it is how one may see it. This question refers to vitality in a general sense. Vitality is how one feels about it, it can be energy, vigor, prosperity or quality of life and whatever that excites you. The purpose of this question is to gather a general pulse on feelings regarding vitality. Input will get more specific as we

get into the future land use issues, when more questions will be developed to gauge the vitality in specific areas, such as economic vitality and educational.

On the question “Your vision for future land use planning on Prospector Hill includes which of the following?”

- One of the participants suggested limiting the selection to one and eliminating the fifth choice “Other” to gauge the public’s preference on future land use planning on Prospector Hill. Mark Hofman suggested the audience could raise their hands to indicate their one choice. The following is the result of the raised hand poll:
 - Open area with wildlife corridors and other recreational uses (35-40 votes).
 - Single family homes on large lots (5 votes).
 - Mix of single family homes and medium density residential with open space areas (12 votes).
 - Pockets of medium/high density development surrounded by open space areas (5 votes)

On the question “Most of the Sun Valley ‘Gateway’ is privately owned by the Sun Valley Company. The 2005 Sun Valley Comprehensive Plan includes open space and medium density residential development of both sides of Sun Valley Road. Would your community vision of the Future Land Use Plan for this area be:”.

- Mark Hofman clarified that medium density refers to 4-7 or 4-9 dwelling units per acre in general. The discussion of density will become more specific, with graphics showing how various densities may look in the Gateway area, when it comes to the future land use discussion for the area.
- One of the members of the public asked if the Gateway was zoned in perpetuity as Open Space. Mark Hofman said that there was an absence of consensus on the future land use of the Gateway in the 2005 Comprehensive Plan Update. In 2007, the community re-discussed the future land use of the Gateway again and a possible land use scenario was presented for adoption. The scenario aims to achieve a balance between private property right and open space. The proposed land use of the Gateway is at the level of a comprehensive plan and does not have standing like an ordinance. The Gateway is not currently zoned long term or in perpetuity as Open Space.
- Wally Huffman asked whether the Cottonwood and Penny Hill parcels are included in the Gateway. Mark Hofman said that his definition of the Gateway in the 2005 Comprehensive Plan Update does not include the Cottonwood parcel but does include the Penny Hill area. Hofman further said that all six Land Use Planning Areas were discussed at the Steering Committee meetings. The Steering Committee reached a consensus to dissolve the Land Use Planning Area of Horseman’s Center and the Community School. They suggested adding the Horseman’s Center into the Land Use Planning Area of the Gateway. The current parking area for the Pavilion is zoned medium density residential. Penny Hill is in the Land Use Planning Area and is currently zoned medium density residential. The rest of the Gateway is primarily zoned Outdoor Recreation (OR-1).

On the question “What concerns you about Sun Valley’s future?”

- Karen Reinheimer selected “Other” and said that she is concerned over the impact of development on wildlife and the future public process in Sun Valley in terms of public participation in the update process.

On the question “Please select the issues you think are the most important for the City of Sun Valley.”

- Wally Huffman commented that there is a very limited selection of issue items on this question.

- Lisa Stelck said that the issues listed are more specific to land use but not to the functioning of the City government, economic vitality and relationship with Sun Valley Company, which many of the members of the public would rank much higher than what are listed in the selection.
- Cris Thiessen said the economic vitality and viability of Sun Valley Company should be listed.
- Mark Hofman responded that as the Steering Committee moves forward with more in depth questions the community sentiment can be better measured for each important issue.
- One member of the public pointed out the list of issues are all of an environmental nature. She suggested the question be phrased as “Please select the environmental issues you think are the most important for the City of Sun Valley.” Mark Hofman responded that a number of issues have been discussed in the Steering Committee meetings, including economic, educational, fostering business, etc.
- Karen Reinheimer said that the items listed in the question are all issues related to the quality of life in Sun Valley, which average citizens living here and visitors value most. These items are related to the economic driving forces of the area and she hope that they are also important issues for those who have economic concern for Sun Valley.

On the question “Which of the following transportation amenities do you feel are important to pursue?”

- Two members in the audience selected “Other” and they said it is air transportation and the highway.

After the public input questions session the floor was open to public comment and questions.

Ross Matthew asked how many homes of various types, including single family homes, townhomes, condominiums, etc. currently exist in the town of Sun Valley. Mark Hofman said that it is roughly 3,000 homes.

One member of the public commented that the road where the bus goes through Twin Creeks has been pretty bad for quite a while. She said that she appreciates the City’s effort in maintaining the trails very well. Mark Hofman said that road and infrastructure maintenance is part of the Action Items of the current Comprehensive Plan and on a yearly basis the City Council budgets for repair and maintenance of roads.

Ross Matthews thanked the audience for participating in the Town Hall meeting. He said that out of the 3,000 homes here, Kathleen and he have one. He said that less than 2% of homeowners are at the meeting today which is discouraging. It may be due to the fire or other reasons that they are not at the Town Hall meeting. He said that as a member of the Holding family it is important to make a brief comment about the process. He acknowledged that everybody has their own view. He said that he admired his late father-in-law who was a wonderful steward of the land. Earl Holding was very generous with the community, for example, constructing the Pavilion for the Summer Symphony. He has given to the community continuously. At the same time he was also a very firm believer in individual property rights and he fought his entire time here in the community of Sun Valley for his right to develop his land. Matthew said that he noticed question 8 listed the most important areas of focus; these areas are the Sun Valley Village/Commercial Core, Horseman’s Center/Community School, Sun Valley Gateway, White Clouds, Penny Hill and Prospector Hill. He also pointed out that in question 11 the beginning of the question is “Most of the Sun Valley ‘Gateway’ is privately owned by the Sun Valley Company....” He said the same statement could have been put to the top of question 8 as most of the land and all of those are owned by the Sun Valley Company. He reminded the public that as they consider what should be done it is important to remember that there are individual property rights and just because Earl chose not to develop his land in the time he was alive does not mean that the community should deny him the right to develop what small parcels are developable within the land that he owns after his death. He hoped the community will remember this as the process moves forward.

The amount of land that Sun Valley Company owns is quite large and the amount that is developable is quite small.

Karen Reinheimer said that she has been attending the Steering Committee meetings and sharing a bit of the history of the 2005 Comprehensive Plan Update process with them. She said she was one of the two individuals to follow the process through sitting at the Steering Committee meetings, attending the hearings of the Planning and Zoning Commission and the City Council. She said it is important for the community to know that with the introduction of the draft Comprehensive Plan in July 2005, there were only 3 public hearings available for citizen comment following that and the draft Comprehensive Plan was not available for the citizens or interested parties to see prior to that except the land use meeting in January. In the January meeting people came out in force, especially at the second meeting, for keeping the Gateway open. Plus, they spoke on other parcels in the City of Sun Valley. The next day (and this is on the tape) the Steering Committee was instructed to incorporate as much the Sun Valley master plan as possible as part of the Comprehensive Plan. There was, as she heard it and read it in the minutes, something of a mandate from the prior mayor as far as how things should proceed even in the face of the public input. She said the whole Comprehensive Plan was passed in two public hearings. Planning and Zoning was one hearing held in two sessions at 9:00 am and 8:00 am in the morning and the whole Comprehensive Plan was passed in one single City Council public hearing. She shared this with hopes that the community will be listened to this time and that ample opportunities will be given throughout the process for public participation. She said the community was not listened to last time as far as the land use maps were concerned. She further pointed out that two tiers existed in the 2005 Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee. There was a smaller group who made most of the decisions and wrote most of the Comprehensive Plan towards the end. Also there were three out of five Planning and Zoning members on the Steering Committee, two Council Members and the Mayor so there was a voting bloc which accounts for it being passed like that.

Paul Connolly said that he was on the last Committee and did not agree with what Karen said. He said there was a lot of openness. The meeting was held at the Limelight room which was filled up with people. The Steering Committee invited people who could not make it to come to the meeting the following day. He disagreed with Karen how the last Comprehensive Plan happened. It was true that at the very end of the process there was a small group of people who got together and wrote the whole plan. There wasn't a lot of talk about what was written in the plan afterwards but the plan represented what people wanted. It went to the Planning and Zoning Commission which was a long meeting. The City Council meeting went on for eight or nine hours before it was approved. He said that Karen's interpretation is quite different from his.

Nils Ribi said that he agreed with what Paul said.

One member of the public said he would like to see the Bitterroot Subdivision connected with the Sun Valley core by a walking path. Right now Bitterroot is connected to Ketchum by a walking path. To connect Bitterroot to Sun Valley what would be required is to put a footbridge near the cul-de-sac of Snow Brush Lane and get an easement from the Community School so people can walk through it and then walk down into Bitterroot.

One of the members of the public said he is a Sun Valley Resort employee. He said he has been living here for five years. He loved working and living in this community which is beautiful. He referred to a question earlier that dealt with how to get more input from the youth or things to do for the youth in the community. He said the problem here is everything closes way too early. He has received questions from visitors asking what to do, where to go, what to eat between 11:00 pm to 7:00 am because there was nothing available. He said that going forward some of the questions should be garnered toward the younger generation because that is the future. He said that the Town Hall meeting does not get a lot of participation by the younger age group because the questions are not relevant to them. He suggested that we should include everybody in the discussion if we can, even it may means more meetings.

Kathleen Holding said she would like to address the concern over the change of ownership of Sun Valley Resort. She said she would like to personally tell everybody that her family is not going anywhere in her lifetime or her kids' lifetime. She said that the fourth generation of the family is going to be born in September. The family is going to be in Sun Valley for a long time. She would be happy to talk to those who have such a concern.

Mark Hofman concluded the meeting with discussion of the way forward and thanked the audience and the Holdings for their participation. The Town Hall meeting was adjourned at 6:15 pm.