

**Central Butte Neighborhood
Steering Committee #4
September 13, 2010
6:30 PM – 8:30 PM**

MEETING NOTES

Steering Committee Attendees:

Jim Fay (ad hoc)	Dan Steele
Ed Kilgore	Jim Shive

Members not in attendance:

Dave Fawcett	Chris duToit	Julie Tranmer
John Metz	Sandy Johnson	
Gary Jones	Revonda Stordahl	
Linda Foster	Jim Hope	

Staff/Consultant Attendees:

Steve Hess (staff)	Ken Markert
Anne Cossitt	Jolene Rieck

Guests:

Mike Sheehey

Anne Cossitt began the steering committee meeting by introducing Jim Fay, who is participating on the committee as an ad hoc member.

Jolene Rieck presented the key themes from the town hall meeting. She indicated that people were appreciative of the improvements that were occurring around the planning area. Many participants indicated that it is the “people” in the community contribute to the dynamic of the neighborhoods. Most participants indicated that an improvement to infrastructure (sidewalks, especially) would be the one thing that they wish to change. When listing types of businesses or services that were desirable in the planning area, the list was very diverse. However, a grocery store was desirable and bars and casinos were not desirable.

The Central Butte planning area is within the National Historic Landmark District. When asked, town hall participants generally indicated that historic character of new buildings was very important. When asked to prioritize the topic areas for the planning effort, the top three were housing, community services and infrastructure.

Ken Markert presented the results of the citizen mail survey. He indicated that the sample group was 38 percent of the registered voters in the planning area. Six hundred and twenty surveys were distributed, with a 30 percent response rate. The goal was to get a 50 percent response rate. He cautioned steering committee members to use the information with the response rate in mind.

He indicated that the most positive features of the neighborhood were the affordability of housing and good neighbors – a statistical tie. Respondents indicated that they liked being close to the medical center and work. The historic architecture was also in the top rankings of positive features.

The negative features by respondents were the poor conditions of the sidewalks and streets, followed by unsightly properties and dilapidated buildings. Respondents indicated that the obstacles to home improvement were deteriorating adjacent properties, difficulty finding financing and environmental issues. The steering committee discussed the merit of block by block improvements.

The survey asked about proposing a requirement that Butte/Silver Bow review new development for historical compatibility. The yes, no, and no opinion responses were a statistical tie. Ken explained that this may indicate a lack of awareness about what that means or the respondents did not have enough information to initiate a response.

In the survey, respondents were also asked about ways to make the area safer. Among the top responses were increased police patrols, better sidewalks, lighting and activities to keep teens busy. All responses would be considered a statistical tie. The steering committee discussed how lighting makes a neighborhood safer.

The survey results indicated priorities for improvements with the high priorities being streets, sidewalks, housing, junk vehicles and weeds. Low priorities were new housing and public transportation.

The survey response indicated that more open space and small retail were desirable, but bars and night clubs were not. Keeping the area the same was the most common response. The generalization is that most respondents were satisfied with the current land uses.

Anne Cossitt presented the proposed land use map. She indicated that several input variables were considered to delineate particular items on the map. The steering committee members suggested that Main Street be highlighted as a local gateway. Gateway streets, in order of hierarchy are Montana Street, Utah/Arizona Street and Main Street.

Anne discussed how the existing zoning is very complex for the area. The BSB Growth Policy objectives include creation of the medical overlay district. The committee discussed the potential of converting larger homes to commercial uses. The group spent significant time discussing the merits of the medical overlay district.

Anne and Ken discussed the zoning concept of “form-based zoning.” Form-based zoning is an alternate method of regulating development. Regular zoning is usually based on separation of uses, where retail is separated from residential, for example. Form-based zoning allows for mixed uses within a given area as long as the form (e.g., site development and architecture type) corresponds with the neighborhood pattern.

Steering committee members indicated that the old traditional use patterns in the neighborhood reflected form-based zoning. Essentially Butte already has mixed uses, but this has been continually grandfathered or allowed informally through variances. The steering committee generally agreed that form-based zoning should be considered.

Anne discussed the framework for the planning goals and overarching policy guidelines. Jolene Rieck explained the goals, the rationale and the objectives. The steering committee discussed the need for safe rental housing. The steering committee also discussed land use and density bonuses. New infill housing was also discussed and a desire to have affordable housing that also blends with historic housing in the neighborhood.

Anne Cossitt discussed the format for the October town hall meeting. She reminded the members that the steering committee will meet at 5:30 PM, and then are requested to stay for the town hall meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM.