

MINUTES OF WORKSHOP MEETING

RIDGWAY TOWN COUNCIL

OCTOBER 18, 2017

The Town Council convened for a workshop meeting at 5:35 p.m. in the Ridgway Community Center, 201 N. Railroad Street, Ridgway, Colorado. Councilors Austin, Hawse, Hunter, Williams, Young and Mayor Clark were in attendance. Mayor Pro Tem Johnson was absent.

Town Clerk's Notice of Workshop Meeting dated 10-4-17.

Town Manager Jen Coates reported this is the seventh workshop to discuss creation of a river overlay district and at the previous meeting staff presented the previous iteration of the draft ordinance with Council and public comments. After hearing public and Council comments, staff was directed to prepare a draft ordinance providing clarity and structure. She explained staff was asked to address an exemption from the new subdivision requirements for an ecological study existing buildings that want to condominiumize; clarify trail locations and balance the need for safe and connected trail network with locations on smaller lots; discussed varied regulations for lots in the business district area; explore language for the ecological study. She presented the ordinance which she noted, incorporates the summary of changes from the prior workshop and the items noted. These include exempting existing structures from subdivision requirements, specifically the need for ecological survey; clarification of trail locations, referencing connections and the location of the trail at or above the high water mark; consideration of lots sizes and lots in the business district by exempting single family and duplexes from design guideline and standards; trail access points to the river encouraged, but not mandatory unless there is a connection point or existing or planned trail; conditional use between 25-75 foot setback; property will only be subject to provide ecological study if the property is subdivided, not condominiumized; the ecological survey is to conclude that "no middle or long-term adverse impact will occur to the river corridor with the proposed development".

SPEAKING FROM THE AUDIENCE:

Eric Jacobsen stated he feels the regulations would be "in violation of State statutes" and would be a "regulatory taking" and questioned the Town government being exempted from the regulations.

Dee Dee Decker expressed concerns with the ecological study requirements and "diminished" property value.

Andy Mueller noted two previous subdivided properties, one which contains a structure previously approved by the Town, which would be impacted by the proposed regulations.

Jack Petruccelli explained his parcel has a "plan approved in 1998 by the Town to build a 10,000 square foot building if I meet the set backs" and it "was approved by the Army Corp". He explained under the proposed regulations he will not be able to build the structure as was previously approved.

Andy Mueller asked that "these smaller properties previously platted" "be exempted from the UROD" noting this could be a "very large impact on these land owners" since "actual build area on these lots is not large". He also noted that there were no trails at the time of purchase of these properties. He suggested that "renovation of a building should not trigger the regulations".

Glenn Pauls expressed concerns with the trail requirements, building "impervious surfaces", and the need for a "wildlife study".

Diane Pauls expressed concerns that allowing dogs on trails will affect wildlife, a requirement for “concrete sidewalks” and “lighting on trails” and noted “the Town dumps wastewater into the river”.

Larry Falk stated “the river is a like an artery in the body” and noted “people who own property on the river should have a social responsibility to the rest of Town” noting “zoning is done for the general well fair”, noting “the rest of Town should have access to a common artery that runs through our Town”.

Craig Jackman spoke in support of “smaller lots south of the bridge” having “different classification and modified standards” “so they don’t have to go through variance process”.

Pam Foyster stated “this is about the future” and “is a community asset” and encouraged “if you don’t protect it now you will never get it back”, noting “it isn’t always fair”, it’s more about the whole picture”.

Andrew Coburn supported the draft ordinance and asked if the public was concerned with the proposed set back regulations or the public access via the trail system?

Jack Petrucelli spoke in “favor of enhancing the river through Town” and “encouraged a less restrictive set back”, and stated “the Town should not be exempted” from the proposed regulations.

There were comments from the Council.

Joan Chismire asked if there is “a way of reducing the need for a variance”?

Larry Falk suggested “a possible solution” is “in the core allow smaller setbacks and on the ends that are more rural increase setbacks”.

Glenn Pauls asked for clarification if the regulations would encompass both the east and west sides of the river.

Tom McKenney supported Mr. Coburn’s comments.

Peter Decker asked “is this to protect the river for aesthetic purposes or the quality of the river”?

There was discussion by the Council. Consensus was the Council favors the use of an overlay zone. Staff was directed to review criteria for ecological study; revise language pertaining to conditional use requirements; consider the use of the high water mark or ordinary high water mark; state in the document the Park and Trails Map is a conceptual map. After further Council discussion it was agreed staff should prepare a draft ordinance for introduction at the regular meeting in November.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Pam Kraft, MMC
Town Clerk