

**Business Solution Group
Minutes, Meeting 12.09.04
Buck's T-4 Lodge, 6:00 pm**

Present: Marne Hayes, Eric Becker, Craig Smit, Ryan Hamilton, Bob Biggerstaff, Jack Eakman, Jerry Fishel, Harriet Fishel, Dorothea Jude

Guest: James Taylor; Bostwick Properties

Highway 191 Commercial Development:

James Taylor joined the group to discuss the developments that his company, Bostwick Properties, will be undertaking along the stretch of highway 191 that runs through Big Sky. There are three different sections of commercial land owned by the Taylor family; the gravel pit area just north of Buck's T-4 Lodge, the additional gravel pit area that is opposite the Big Sky Exxon, and the acreage that lines highway 64 (Big Sky Spur Road) east of the sewer ponds.

James touched mainly on the area just north of Buck's that will be developed first of the three areas. He pointed out that the initial thoughts that deal with commercial development must first always look at the way that the housing issue in Big Sky will be affected as well. He noted that housing and more commercial development go hand in hand, as you cannot develop more business and commercial areas without thinking where the working class of those areas will live in Big Sky.

James touched on the different phases of the gravel pit development; there will be 2 phases; the first will have 10 lots available and the second will have 6. The first phase should be ready to break ground on as soon as JTL has ground all that they can from that area; James quoted the estimated date as sometime early 2005. The lots will be platted by the county in February of 2005, and ready to build shortly thereafter. The first phase of 10 lots will be divided up into four sections, and the placement of those sections and the subsequent businesses will be based on the attractiveness of their storefronts, as well as the nature of the business.

The row of four lots that lines hwy 191 will be slated for tourist or retail driven businesses, as they will be most attractive for the drive traffic of 191. the two corner lots of the parcel, which will be partially street front, will be slated for office space, and the back four lots will be slated for light industrial businesses.

In phase 2 of the project, the 6 lots of the parcel that are furthest from the sight of the highway will be earmarked again for industrial, or light industrial type businesses, as there is a great need for this in Big Sky at the present time. He mentioned that although the parcel has not even been platted yet, and there has been nothing put on the market, his company has been approached many times to find out about industrial commercial space available. James stated that Bostwick Properties has not had to do any marketing yet for their development areas, but that once the areas have been approved through the county, they will take a marketing approach to gaining businesses.

He touched briefly on the residential possibilities for his property along 191 as well, and mentioned that there are lots west and north of the commercial development that will be developed residentially after the commercial space has been developed. James

mentioned that there is space for some high density housing units which would address the issue of affordable housing in Big Sky, although the single acre lots will be priced in the roughly \$350,000.00 range. Jack Eakman suggested that James get in touch with the Housing Solutions group so that they could explore possibilities of affordable housing on this land.

The question was raised about water and sewer regulations and hook ups on the parcels and James explained that all lots would be on a common 'STEP' drain system, but that each lot would be required to have its own septic and pump system. He pointed out as well that there would be architectural and developmental guidelines that will apply to all of the building, outlining building style, color restrictions, landscape and more. In addition, there will be certain open space requirements that will apply to both phases of the project.

James touched only briefly on the other two commercial areas for development; the gravel pit opposite the Big Sky Exxon will not be developed for some time, and the commercial acreage that lines the Spur Road is currently under a buy/sell agreement with another developer and will no longer be a Bostwick Properties or Taylor family parcel.

Review of Minutes:

There were no corrections or edits to the minutes from the meeting on November 18th.

Jack Eakman; review of information from area banks:

Jack Eakman took the time to meet with Big Sky Western Bank to find out what are the issues facing entrepreneurs as they attempt to get financing. Jack wanted to find out from the area banks how do they scrutinize venture capital loan applications? He presented a handout that outlined what he found:

- Business venture loans are not thought of as business 'Adventure' loans
- Bank prefers to work with the applicant on an SBA loan where the bank will have protection in the cases of loan recovery
- Bank looks for three main things: financial viability of the applicant, track record of applicants involved, and experience in the enterprise outlined
- Banks will seldom work with unknown clients
- Most frequently cited reason for declination of funding is quality of business plan. Failure to present a thorough business plan directs the loan officer toward a personal rather than a business loan

The discussion then lead to how we can help as a business solutions group to make businesses more aware of what they need to receive the funding they need. In addition, the group talked about developing some sort of mentoring program or guidance program for new businesses or prospective entrepreneurs so that they could have a model of what a business plan should include; the idea being similar to the Bozeman Chamber's SCORE program which uses retired executives as educational contacts for new businesses. Marne will contact the Bozeman Chamber to see what exactly this program entails, and perhaps how we can incorporate something of this nature into the Big Sky businesses climate. It was also suggested that the Chamber work on more seminars and educational sessions for business members that would focus on business financing, business grant

opportunities, etc. Marne will come to the next meeting with some new information about this proposal.

Discussion of continuation of Business Solutions Group:

Marne brought forward the discussion of continuing this group past the resolution stage, or the action plan stage, where most other working groups would be stopping. Whereas other groups seemed more focused towards a specific plan of action, it was suggested that the Business group might have a place to continue as an advisory board to the Chamber of Commerce. Although the group is still encouraged to come up with an action plan that will be presented to the Steering Committee, the idea is that due to the nature of business growth in Big Sky, and due to the fact that the Chamber should always be looking at the changing business climate and what areas of improvement should be addressed, that the group should continue on and be a continuing advisory committee to the Chamber. All present agreed with the idea, and Marne said that she will discuss this idea with the Chamber board at their meeting this month, and will report back with their ideas and input on the proposal. The idea would be to have a once a month meeting where the group got together (people currently involved as well as other business/community members) and discussed the current state of business affairs and developments in Big Sky. There will be more discussion to follow as the group continues their work towards an action plan.

Other Business:

There was some additional conversation about ways that Big Sky could become more recognized in a national setting; Harriet Fishel suggested that there should be some sort of celebrity association with publicity efforts, as this has been successful for other similar areas such as Park City and Sun Valley.

Harriet believes that there is not enough promotion being done for the community of Big Sky and that publicity and national recognition is an area that we need to work on if our businesses and our community are to be successful.

The meeting adjourned; the next meeting will be announced; it will be held sometime in mid-January.