

MEETING MINUTES
Community & Infrastructure Solution Group
October 14, 2004
4:00 p.m.

In attendance: Kate Wilson (Chair), Jack Eakman, Dave O'Connor, Mark Roemer, Bill Davis, Dick Fast, Dave Leverett, Loren Bough, Carol Collins, Kay Reeves, Steve Johnson.

Kate Wilson called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. Steve Johnson volunteered to take the minutes of today's meeting. Kate opened with a re-reading of the rules agreed upon at our last meeting. This was followed by a review of the minutes from the last meeting. Loren Bough made a motion to accept the minutes as written; Carol Collins seconded. The motion carried on voice vote.

As no one outside the Working Group was present, there was no public comment. The meeting proceeded with a resumption of the discussion of current infrastructure, its benefits and shortcomings. The key points from this discussion are summarized below:

Roads

- Highway 191 issues will be taken up by the Growth and Development Solution Group.
- Community and Infrastructure will focus on roads interior to the community.
- The fact that the spur road is a Montana State Highway is positive, and it is well maintained.
- Most of the other local roads are built and maintained by the various homeowners associations, and as such represent quite a mixed bag in terms of quality and maintenance. Once again, we noted that there are no standards, nor any enforcement mechanism to address these concerns. The group felt that we should look into how such measures might be implemented.
- Much of the wear and tear on roads is the result of the large volume of heavy construction traffic. The question was posed whether impact fees or building permit revenues were in any way targeted to address the resulting road maintenance needs. The general consensus was that these fees were controlled by Gallatin County. It was also noted that there were court challenges underway on impact fees.
- With regard to homeowners associations, the only requirement is that if a subdivision is formed, it must also form a homeowners association, but there is no standard for what a homeowners association must do.

Zoning Advisory Board

- The members of the Advisory Board are appointed by Gallatin County, and not elected locally in Big Sky. Most of the members are developers.
- The group generally felt that this was a positive step by Gallatin County, reaching out to Big Sky, but that the authority and enforcement abilities were both weak and ineffective.
- Dave Leverett noted that over the years several individuals had been hired to serve in a zoning enforcement role in Big Sky, and had quit in frustration.

- It was also noted that there are very limited enforcement resources in Gallatin County as a whole, perhaps only a single individual, clearly overwhelmed by developers.
- At some point it may be appropriate to meet and challenge the Gallatin County and Madison County Commissions regarding these concerns.
- It was also observed that any attempt to establish and enforce regulations in the current environment in Big Sky, with the enormous amount of current development activity, would no doubt be frequently challenged by developers bringing lawsuits in court. We should recognize what we might be getting into in this respect.

The discussion then turned to the general role of Gallatin and Madison Counties in administering zoning and other regulations in Big Sky. Gallatin County is well ahead of Madison County in these areas. Gallatin County has a growth policy, developed and adopted a plan for Gallatin Canyon/Big Sky in 1996, and has put in place the Zoning Advisory Board to consult with them on matters relevant to our community. Madison County, on the other hand, has still not completed a growth policy, and is still working on a zoning mechanism. Individual developments do submit plans to Madison County, which are approved one at a time; there is no overall plan for development in Madison County. Bill Davis returned to the issue of building permit revenues and impact fees, noting that this might amount to a very significant source of funding that could be applied to our infrastructure concerns in Big Sky.

A consensus emerged that we were at a point where expertise in local governance matters was needed. We discussed contacting Ken Weaver of the MSU Local Government Center, and Larry Bonderud, Mayor of Shelby, Montana, and President of the Montana League of Cities and Towns. We also asked what we needed to do to properly prepare for discussions with experts such as these. Specifically, we discussed preparing what Dave O'Connor called "the list," detailing our current infrastructure, and our conclusions regarding its various benefits and shortcomings. Kate Wilson mentioned a document that Steve Johnson had drafted, and Steve passed around a copy to the group as an example. Jack Eakman suggested that we use some way to prioritize the concerns, such as a point system or ranking. Erin Hayes also noted that in contacting Messrs. Weaver and Bonderud, we should ask for their suggestions on how we should prepare to meet with them.

Steve Johnson called the group's attention to the Gallatin Canyon/Big Sky Plan, prepared and adopted by Gallatin County in 1996. Carol Collins was one of the people named in the plan as contributing to its development. Although somewhat out of date, it could be a useful framework for our consideration. Steve promised to email web links to the group so everyone could access this document from the Gallatin County website.

As a next step, decided to contact each of the key groups in the current infrastructure regarding their role and challenges in Big Sky. We identified the following leads and contacts:

Group	Solution Group Lead	Contact
Resort Tax	Carol Collins	TBD
Water & Sewer	Dick Fast	Ron Edwards
Ophir School	Kay Reeves	TBD
Fire	Carol Collins	TBD
Zoning Advisory Board	Loren Bough	Becky Pape
Transportation	Dave Leverett	Meg or Yancy
Library	Dave O'Connor, Kay Reeves	Sharon Holtzman
BSAA	?	Mindy Nowakowski
BSOA	Carol Collins	Jack Eakman
Sheriff	Kate Wilson	Local deputies
Roads	Dave O'Connor	Montana DOT
Post Office	Steve Johnson	Jean Palmer
Weed Control	Dave Leverett	Carol Pronka (sp?), Lisa Knorr

This list was compiled as a starting point, with other groups to be added later as appropriate. To guide these discussions, we decided to prepare a “script” addressing the following points:

- Introduction as member of Community and Infrastructure Solution Group.
- Quote the Mission statement of Community and Infrastructure Solution Group.
- What is the role of the group in Big Sky?
- How does the group relate and work with the county?
- What are some of the key successes the group has accomplished?
- What are the key challenges facing the group in the future?
- What could be done to improve the group’s ability to serve Big Sky?
- How might Community and Infrastructure contribute to the group’s future?
- Who else should we contact/speak with regarding this group?

Steve Johnson volunteered to draft the script, and distribute it to the group by email. Individual leads should then get in touch with their contacts as available, conduct the interviews, document the results of the discussion following the script as an outline, and distribute those notes to the members of the Solution Group. It would be great if this could be done before our next meeting. Steve Johnson will make preliminary contacts with both Ken Weaver and Larry Bonderud, asking their willingness to meet with our group at some time in the near future.

Kate suggested that each member of the Solution Group describe their personal background at the next meeting, so we might know each other better. As Bill Davis will miss the next meeting, he described his background as an attorney, and as city attorney for Winfield, Indiana.

The next meeting will be held on Monday, November 8 at 4:00 pm at a location to be determined and communicated by Kate.

Kate Wilson adjourned the meeting at 6:00 pm.