

*Below is an outline of the comments Alliance Executive Director Trevor Stevenson verbally presented at the 4 p.m. **April 27, 2011**, Jackson Town Council and Teton Board of County Commissioners public hearing on the Comprehensive Plan.*

1. It is an honor to be here to speak on behalf of the Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance, an organization that was founded to help develop good comprehensive plans for Jackson Hole, and has now worked on these issues intensively for more than three decades.
2. We appreciate your years of effort, and your recent openness to meeting with me and other members of the Alliance to discuss key issues directly.
3. We're heartened by your proposed Growth Management plan, and we believe that it may be the beginnings of a good framework.
  - a. We hope to collaborate in developing realistic and appropriate details for the growth management plan.
4. I believe that in many ways we are in fact fundamentally on the same page with regard to what we want to accomplish with the Comp Plan. But that needs to be made much more clear.
5. It is clear that through the years of work on the Comp Plan, the community has clearly expressed a desire for some things to be addressed. We have done our best to convey these priorities to you in letters, publications, and conversations.
  - a. Growth Management
  - b. Public Participation
  - c. Timeline for adoption: Character District Maps must be an integral part of the Comp Plan
6. I am doing my best to calm down some of the rhetoric, asking people to give you a chance to clearly demonstrate that you will be responsive to their requests and provide clear solutions to these concerns. My hope is to address these overarching themes now, so that we can have a more productive discussion for the next few months.
7. The process you use will largely determine the quality of the result that you get. Unfortunately, it is not at all clear what that process will be. The process of your meeting today did not clearly address how you will proceed, and prioritized a number of cosmetic details instead. I think you all want to address this, but within the structure of your facilitated meetings it hasn't been possible.
8. If you do not allay public concerns tonight about public participation and the timeframe for maps and final adoption of the Comp Plan, we can all look forward to months of angry, fearful and frustrated comments that don't necessarily help address the important content of the plan. I will no longer be able to ask people to continue waiting, or to trust you to address this. I don't want this to happen, and I'm sure you don't want that. Please take the opportunity tonight to address this.
  - a. Note that we have made a deliberate decision to NOT activate our full membership of 2,000 households, and have not conducted any outreach to encourage them to attend tonight's meeting. This is because the status of the Comp Plan draft is still too nebulous, and the process for moving forward is unclear. We DO plan to activate our membership and encourage them to attend the comment session after the upcoming draft, and we hope that it will be a draft that our members will support.

9. On a related note, the Alliance feels that, overall, the elected officials and planning staff have become too isolated in analyzing and deciding on these vital policies.
  - a. Public involvement has been too limited lately, although I appreciate that you have expanded the comment session tonight from what you had originally scheduled.
  - b. Perhaps more importantly, the involvement of independent experts has been too limited. Not enough effort is being made to do necessary research and analysis to inform decisions, and to compare our work to other cutting-edge Comp Plans.
    - i. The Alliance is trying to contribute to solving this by bringing in some independent review and analysis on some specific issues, but we feel that the electeds need to also do more to prioritize independent studies, analysis and comparisons on other aspects of the plan. Our decisions need to be clearly driven by the best possible data, not just our well-intentioned opinions.
10. In sum, please work to address some of the public's key concerns, and open the process to allow for more productive involvement by the public. Make it a priority to conduct the necessary studies, involve key experts and clearly make your decisions based on the best possible data.
11. The Alliance is delighted to have the opportunity to work with a group of elected officials and planning staff who share our priorities for the preservation and enhancement of our unparalleled wildlife, our spectacular scenery and our unique community character. We hope to strengthen our support of this process to ensure that we achieve the best possible plan, and we appreciate you taking our concerns and recommendations into account.
12. Thank you.