

October 28, 2011

**Re: Alliance Neighborhood Discussions**

Dear County Commissioners, Mayor, Town Council, Planning Commissioners, and Planning Staff:

As you may already know, the Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance facilitated seven “Alliance Neighborhood Discussions” during the last two weeks. The purpose of these discussions was to help reengage the public in the Comp Plan process, and to prepare people to participate effectively in the official Character District Discussions that are going on now.

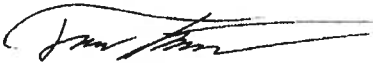
Within the Alliance Neighborhood Discussions, the Alliance staff briefly presented on the current status of the Comp Plan process, and what the focus of this phase of public input is. We very specifically *did not* present the Alliance positions or analyses at these meetings, in order to avoid overly influencing participants. Nonetheless, we were pleased that participants independently prioritized many of the same issues and objectives that the Alliance is most concerned about.

We hope that our efforts will help make public comment more relevant and specific during the workshops that run until next Tuesday. We will keep our members and the participants in our neighborhood discussions informed as to how their input is incorporated into the plan after this phase is completed.

For your interest, I am attaching the full notes from all of the Alliance Neighborhood Discussions. This document includes the key ideas brought up by residents. When we sent this document out today, we also included the key recommendations of the Alliance as an organization, since we did not address those during the discussions. I hope that this document provides you some insight into the work we’re doing to support community involvement in the Comp Plan process, and I think you’ll enjoy seeing some of the ideas that were brought up in each neighborhood.

I look forward to seeing all of you at the workshops over the next few days.

Sincerely,



Trevor Stevenson  
Executive Director

## **Summary of Alliance Neighborhood Discussions in Teton County**

In October, the Conservation Alliance facilitated seven neighborhood discussions in the Town and County to discuss the Comprehensive Plan and the character district maps. We asked people to discuss their goals for the future of their neighborhood, and the future of Teton County. Several key themes arose from those meetings, and are outlined below.

The Town and County are holding meetings through November 1<sup>st</sup> to solicit public comment and input regarding the future of our community. Please go to the meeting nearest your home or to the hub location (details below) and make your voice heard. At the meeting, be sure to verify that the facilitator in your group discussion is recording each of your ideas in writing so that it is included in the public record. Follow-up emails and letters to the planning staff and elected officials are a great way to make sure that your opinions are heard. Visit [www.jhalliance.org/takeactioncontacts.htm](http://www.jhalliance.org/takeactioncontacts.htm) for their contact information.

### **Key Recommendations of the Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance:**

The core objective of the Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance is that our new Comprehensive Plan must respect that Jackson Hole's identity, community character, quality of life and economy all depend on sustaining our precious wildlife, landscapes and natural resources. To achieve this objective, the Conservation Alliance has several recommendations for next steps in the Comp Plan process.

**1. Work must begin now to identify how we will ensure that permanent conservation is achieved in exchange for increased density in some areas.**

One of the primary goals of the Comp Plan policies is the shifting of development potential away from rural, ecologically valuable areas to areas of existing development that are more suitable for future growth. However, there has been virtually no progress toward identifying effective methods to achieve this shift in development. There must be assurances that this objective will be met and details as to how it will be met before the Comp Plan is adopted.

**2. No net additive growth should be allowed.**

Before completing the Character District Maps, the county should report back with the amount of future development we could expect to see if the maps become reality, so we can gauge whether we have a plan that would enable a drastic change in the character of Teton County.

**3. Wildlife migration corridors, habitat connectivity, scenic vistas and open space preservation must be clearly illustrated as priorities on the final Character District Maps.**

**4. An "Action Plan" must be developed to detail how and when unresolved issues in the Comp Plan will be addressed, and how the conservation objectives of the Comp Plan will be funded.**

Many policies within the Comp Plan essentially say "we'll figure this out later." Before the Comp Plan is adopted, the community needs to see a concrete plan for how and when we'll resolve these issues, and how we'll fund community priorities.

## **Key Community Ideas:**

Below are themes that we generally heard echoed by almost all participants in the Neighborhood Discussions, in all areas of Teton County.

1. Wildlife connectivity and habitat, scenic corridors and land conservation are critically important to protect and maintain our wildlife populations and community character.
2. Road development and expansion often has negative effects on the surrounding neighborhoods and should be avoided. Reduced speed limits, increased safety, rural character and the risks to wildlife should all be considered when new or expanded roads are being proposed.
3. Additive growth is unacceptable. If development potential is shifted into or otherwise increased in already developed areas, there must be a mechanism in place to ensure permanent conservation in rural areas.
4. Limit the overall amount of growth in the valley and within each of the districts.
5. This Comp Plan needs to focus on predictability in terms of the amount, type and location of growth, and the regulations need to be stricter when awarding variances.
6. There is largely adequate commercial development in many of the out-of-town districts and no additional commercial zoning is needed.
7. Infill and redevelopment is preferable over suburban sprawl, but is only appropriate in certain areas.
8. Workforce housing is important but must be located in appropriate areas.
9. The Comp Plan needs to be more specific about how it plans to accomplish its goals.
10. The discussions about each of the districts should include their context within the county and relative to adjacent districts.

## **Official Neighborhood Workshops Schedule:**

### **October 27**

11 am - 2 pm Nick Wilson's, 3265 W. Village Drive  
5 - 8 pm Jackson Senior Center, 830 E. Hansen Avenue  
6 - 8 pm Alta Library, 50 Alta School Road

### **October 28**

7 - 10 am Bar BC Ranch House , 4745 N. Spring Gulch Road  
5 - 8 pm Cafe Boheme, 1110 Maple Way

### **October 29**

10 am - 1 pm Rafter J Childcare Center, 3105 W. Big Trail Drive  
2 - 5 pm Old Wilson Schoolhouse, 5655 W. Main Street

### **October 31**

3 - 6 pm Teton Pines Clubhouse, 3450 Clubhouse Drive

### **November 1**

12 - 2 pm Snow King Grand Ballroom, 400 E. Snow King Avenue

### **"Hub" hours**

9am-4pm, Oct. 27, 28, 29, 31, Nov. 1 at the 4H Building (south Miller Park)

## **Appendix A: Neighborhood Discussion Summaries**

Below are the detailed notes generated in each of the Alliance Neighborhood Discussions. The points presented here do not necessarily represent a consensus among participants, but document ideas that were brought up.

### **South Park – October 12, 2011**

#### **Values to preserve:**

- Scenic vistas and hay meadows
- Wildlife habitat and connectivity for small and large animals (Nature Mapping (citizen scientists) should be better incorporated into wildlife assessments throughout the County and in South Park)
  - Connectivity both north to south and east to west
- Flat Creek as a riparian corridor (particularly valuable for birds)
- Importance of agricultural lands and vistas - especially Flat Creek to Hwy 89
- Do not widen South Park Loop Road
  - Any development as a result of obtaining permanent conservation easements should be set back from South Park Loop and High School roads to provide a visual buffer.

#### **Ideas on growth management:**

- The Plan should help facilitate the five large landowners to preserve land and develop clustered developments that are well planned out. Landowners should also be able to get value for their land.
- As a landowner it is frustrating to have your land use decisions dictated by elected officials
- Do not transfer in any new density to South Park from outside of South Park
- Do not grant any additional density within South Park without associated permanent conservation
- No more growth is appropriate for South Park
- Maintain current rural zoning and prioritize permanent conversation
- Do not identify any additional large developable sites in South Park
- High School Road is currently accommodating more cars than it was designed to, and this must be taken into consideration if any new development is considered for South Park
- Future growth in South Park should be concentrated where it already exists
- Do not mix residential and business uses in South Park – people appreciate being able to leave town behind to come home.
- Use a limited number of new sewer hookups every year as a way to limit growth
- Put apartments and multi-family units instead of single-family units in the suburban zone in the north-west corner of South Park; single-family homes already exist elsewhere
- Downzoning South Park is a possibility

#### **Additional opportunities for transition:**

- Finish the bike path from Rancho Alegre to Melody Ranch
- Get rid of the two gravel pits
- This is a rural area, not a complete neighborhood
- Build a wildlife underpass under Highway 89

## **The Aspens – October 17, 2011**

### **Values to preserve:**

- Wildlife is the character of this area, and it is why we live here
- Protecting wildlife habitat, habitat connectivity, migration corridors and pockets of space for them to rest is very important
- The Aspens is a “complete” neighborhood – and in this case “complete” means finished. Basically, it is a stable area
- Keep the Teton County Housing Authority’s 5-acre parcel zoned single-family
- Keep the area west of the Aspens/Pines zoned rural

### **Ideas on growth management:**

- Do not build a 4-lane highway where 390 is right now
- No more commercial development
- Require large employment centers, like the Village, to provide adequate housing and thereby reduce traffic generation

### **Additional Thoughts:**

- Predictability is very important, and we should move away from making exceptions on land use decisions. This Comp Plan is a moving target still, and not predictable
- Don’t ask us to make decisions in a vacuum. We need to bear in mind the context and the surrounding areas, such as Teton Village

## **Indian Springs/Cottonwood – October 18, 2011**

### **Roads/Transportation Issues:**

- The proposed Tribal Trails connector road should not be built because:
  1. It will degrade scenic views
  2. It will reduce nearby property values
  3. It will bring unnecessary traffic into the area
  4. It is unsafe to add more cars where there are so many schools and kids
  5. It will bisect important wildlife habitat
  6. Added infrastructure would not preserve the character of the area
  7. It will encourage people to get into their cars rather than biking or walking, particularly the traffic to and from the schools
  8. It will inevitably be used as a regional cutoff road and not only by local traffic
  9. It is simply moving the burden of increased traffic from the “Y” intersection to the tribal trails area – a connector cannot be built to save the “Y”. There are many solutions to that intersection that warrant further exploration
  10. It would not help to further the Comp Plan’s goals of wildlife and character preservation
  11. It will be expensive for taxpayers
- South Park Loop Road north from High School Road could be improved by reducing speeds and making the pathway crossings safer. There are a lot of homes and families directly on the road.
- The character of South Park Road should be protected, particularly the cottonwoods, which would be threatened if the road were to expand. We should also be conscious to plant new cottonwood trees to replace the old ones.
- Speed limits on highway 22 should be 45 mph year round.
- We need better signage on the highways to alert motorists of wildlife activity in the area.
- Wildlife crossings should be a priority.
- High School road should be preserved for its aesthetic, scenic, academic, neighborhood, and rural appeal. It is not a highway. A bike path should be added on the south side of the road to make travel to and from school safer. Traffic calming methods such as trees planted on a median to create a boulevard feel should be explored.

### **Wildlife/Scenic Values**

- The whole greater South Park area has wildlife habitat and corridors.
- The haystacks across from Smiths create a cool view.

### **Character**

- The school area as it exists today is a great place to educate our community’s children, with all of the open space, the wildlife and the views of the mountains.
- We should preserve the rural, neighborhood feel of the greater South Park area, which is currently perpetuated by both the physical surroundings and the layout of the neighborhoods. We should also maintain the family feel of the area, and recognize that it houses much of the workforce, which is one of the backbones of this community.
- People appreciate being able to leave Town “behind” when they go home to their neighborhood at the end of the day
- Northern South Park is an extension of Cottonwood: when planning the future of both of these areas we should consider the context and the valley as a whole, not individual neighborhoods in isolation.
- If development happens in northern South Park, there should be a buffer zone planned for the northern most portion along High School Road to South Park Loop Road to help maintain the rural feel of the area, and it should be community oriented open space.

## **Development/Redevelopment**

- Gregory Lane would be a great place to redevelop into workforce housing, and transition the industrial uses further south.
- The entire corridor surrounding Sunrise and the old Feed Store could be redeveloped to more closely resemble the Smiths Plaza (i.e. mixed use) and maintain a livable, Town-like feel. This is the gateway to Town from the south and should be redeveloped
- Infill in Town and revitalization of already developed areas should be prioritized over new development.
- This community should continue to provide workforce and affordable housing opportunities.

## **Wilson – October 19, 2011**

### **Five Main Concerns:**

- No additive growth in Wilson, limit to existing by-right
- Preservation of wildlife habitat, connectivity, and corridors by maintaining openness
  - Wildlife and human activity work together in Wilson with the existing density – residential areas can be wildlife habitat – they are not mutually exclusive
  - Conserve existing open space directly adjacent to Wilson (Waldron Property) and distant from Wilson (Fall Creek Road)
- No more commercial zoning – there is already 30% of available commercial vacant, Wilson does not need more.
- Preserve Wilson's character, perhaps with Wilson specific standards or codes
- Planning staff and elected officials need to check back in after the next round of public comment with residents to make sure they heard what we said.

### **Other comments we heard:**

- Stay the way it is now
- How do we accommodate more growth and stay the same – incompatible goals
  - How (form) to develop is important – form based code – specific design standards – need finer plan codes
- Traffic Calming measures are needed
- We need predictability
- Fencing – aesthetics, predictability, a sense of openness in Wilson and wildlife permeability
- Limit light pollution – dark skies initiative
  - Codes not up to the whole county, smaller scale
- We have a lot of wetlands and wildlife habitat, even in downtown Wilson
  - Tradeoff of wetlands in Wilson for wetlands in Buffalo Valley or elsewhere are not acceptable
- Nature mapping and other citizen science should be incorporated
- Include specifics in the Maps – deal with issues now, don't delay
- Community and neighborhood standards – be clear on what you want
  - Wilson character – informal, livable, flow, human & wildlife activity, lack of density, integration of different lifestyles, wildlife corridors, openness
  - Maintain scenic, low density on Fall Creek Road to the southern end
- We need a report back from the elected/planners to make sure they heard what we said
- Wildlife corridors, connectivity, crossings (WTI study integrated in the plan)
- One valley – what happens in Wilson affects elsewhere, what happens elsewhere affects Wilson

## Alta – October 20, 2011

### Key Points:

- Maintain rural atmosphere & character, scenic nature
- Preserve wildlife corridors & open space, while balancing private property rights

### Other Points & Comments:

- Connect Alta to Alta with improved roads, pathways & bridges
- Large landowners might change, need clustering, zoning, TDR's to plan for this
  - Protect open space by clustering development
- Split on the issue of needing commercial, retail space
  - Might be nice to have home based offices or some commercial so residents can conduct business in Wyoming, not Idaho
  - Office complexes should not interfere or conflict with existing character
- Protect the water supply
  - At what point does development impact water?
  - Planned future population limited by viable water supply
  - Residents do not want a municipal water supply
- Stable areas include around the church, school, existing subdivisions
- Alta is stable just as it is right now, allow as little development as possible
- Nothing should ever change, period.
- Transitional areas include south of Teton Creek, north of Golf Course, East of State Line (across the street in Idaho is planned for denser development). East of State Line might be appropriate for light industrial
- Any industrial/office/retail needs specific design guidelines
- Question: if BLM or other public lands are sold within the character district, what zoning/rules would then apply?
- Maintain Teton Creek and South Leigh Creek as areas to preserve for wildlife
- Finish park in Targhee Town
- Pathways to connect with Forest Service trails
- Preserve views through conservation easements (Wilson property)
- Incentivize Wilson property to maintain agricultural uses
- Preserve farm land on Alta North Road and North State Line Road
- Commercial would have to be 'handpicked' in order to align with the community's desires and needs for what the business is and what it looks like
- Teton Teepee area is a transitional area
- Predictability of what 'it' will look like and how 'it' fits into Alta
  - Alta specific building standards

## **East Jackson/Town Periphery – October 25, 2011**

### **Future growth and development**

- No commercial development, including resorts, in the Town Periphery district and down Cache Creek Drive, as it would just draw people there. It is not a complete neighborhood. Also it would not be viable.
- No high-density development in the Town Periphery district
- Transition mobile home parks to single family zoning
- The Planned Unit Development (PUD) tool is the largest threat to this district as it offers higher densities
- Tighten the regulations so that there are not so many variances granted; ensure that variances are granted in accordance with state law (stipulates that there must be a hardship to receive a variance)

### **Character**

- East Jackson is already overdeveloped
- Current SR-1 zoning and FLUP descriptions were appropriate, including allusions to landscaping predominating over buildings and a peaceful, quiet, tranquil, wildlife permeable neighborhood with larger lot sizes.
- Leave the area alone: it is fine as it is. It is a stable, rural area.
- Plow the snow promptly, including the sidewalks

### **Transportation**

- The roadways are already overloaded and cannot take more cars, so no more development is appropriate
- Redevelopment of Redmond Street was a bad idea. However, the sidewalks on Redmond do make the road safer for bikers and pedestrians.
- Explore reducing the speed limits to 20mph
- Lack of parking is a big problem, particularly with the added density that the PUD tool affords; increase the parking requirements
- Building sidewalks takes away parking spots and eliminates safe places for people to walk in the winter because they are not plowed and reduce the width of the road; don't build any more sidewalks
- Don't expand Cache Creek Drive or make it a complete street – this would only make it more of a safety hazard for bikers and pedestrians. Maintain or increase on-street parking. Add speed bumps or mirrors to increase safety. Encourage the use of nearby trails instead of the road.

### **General comments**

- Increase predictability and accountability in the process as a whole
- Question the goal of housing 65% of our workforce locally
- New voices are needed in this conversation

### **Three primary points**

1. Maintain the single-family nature of the neighborhood
2. Maintain larger lot sizes
3. Do not allow the PUD tool to be used

## **Wilson/County Valley - October 26, 2011**

- If we want to achieve a society-wide shift to less single-occupancy vehicle dependence, we will need increased density
- Population based on sustainable community and sustainable economy
- Don't even allow people to consider building in 'rural' 35-acre ranchettes
  - We all know it will grow, and we all don't want sprawl, this requires density
  - Town, East Jackson, Wilson, Melody Ranch infill
    - Infill existing areas within their boundaries, do no sprawl outward
- We can't say we don't allow people here
- Gregory Lane is an appropriate area for more density or redevelopment
- Do we need more housing? (There are a lot of vacancies)
- Affordable housing exactions should be more progressive
- Redevelopment vs. keeping 'low class' affordable rentals & housing
- Housing authority to buy existing housing stock rather than develop new housing stock
- Development restrictions may alter prices because they exclude certain types of development – this can force new development in certain directions and may have contributed to the current housing stock available.