

**Doney Park-Timberline-Fernwood Area Plan Update Committee
Meeting #7 Notes June 11, 2020 5:00-8:00 pm
Zoom Meeting**

I. Welcome and Introductions

Committee Members

Bryan Bates
Dave Browning
Bernice Carver
Monica Julian
John Ruggles
Evelyn Wannie
Rob Wilson (chair)
Harriet Young

Guest Speakers

Elizabeth Richardson – Environmental Health Program Manager III and former Coconino County Code Compliance Manager
Mark Stento – Code Compliance Officer and Dark Sky Compliance Specialist, City of Flagstaff
David Wessel – MetroPlan Planning Manager

County Staff

Melissa Shaw
Jessica Simmons
Jess McNeely
Jay Christelman

Members of the Public

Cameron Watson
Carol Kruse
Kris? – joined in later

II. Review of Meeting Notes from May 14

The notes were accepted.

III. Presentations

Elizabeth Richardson: Code Compliance in Coconino County

50 to 70 calls per year in the DPTF area. The most frequent complaint is about vacation rentals; they cause parking, fire department, and police issues. Other common issues are dangerous problems like bad electrical wiring or fireplaces, businesses being run out of the home, junk, and livestock issues. There is just one compliance manager to enforce codes. Code enforcement and law enforcement are largely separate. Seems to be a “collision of cultures” conflict

between residents who moved into DPTF relatively recently, bought an expensive home, and expect everything to be orderly; and people who have lived there for decades who want code enforcement to be more relaxed.

Question: Can people make complaints anonymously if they fear retribution from their neighbors?

Answer: We usually don't allow anonymous reports because people have the right to confront their accuser, and also everything that comes into the county is public information. It also cuts down on the number of complaints received, which may reduce the number of petty or malicious complaints. Complaints can be anonymous if there is a documented history of abuse from the neighbor.

Comment: City of Flagstaff does allow anonymous complaints, as do all other counties in Arizona. People who are breaking the rules shouldn't be protected; the person who isn't in violation should be protected. It makes it so intimidating people don't get brought to the attention of authorities because people are scared.

Comment: This issue is outside the purview of the area plan; this is an issue to raise with Community Development.

Comment: We should include code compliance issues in our survey.

Question: Is there anything you would suggest we include in our area plan?

Answer: With housing so expensive, people are working for ways to supplement their income which may include bringing other people onto their property or having a business at their home, which are the basis for many complaints. Important to let people coming to Flagstaff have a place to live in dignity. Housing availability and affordability could be addressed in the plan.

Mark Stento: Dark Sky Lighting and Compliance in Coconino County

Flagstaff became the world's first international dark sky city in 2001. There are limits on lumens/acre on the books, which mostly apply to commercial operations. Limits apply to commercial and industrial uses by the acre, and to single family residences by the residence. Commercial properties are actively patrolled; residential enforcement is primarily reactive. There are four observatories in the area, and Flagstaff and Coconino County are broken into three lighting zones based on distances from these observatories. DPTF is in Lighting Zone 3, the least restrictive zone, based on its location; however it elected to follow the limits under Zone 2. Blue light emitted by LEDs, which are becoming better and more affordable all the time, causes strong light pollution. Flagstaff and Coconino County are working on revising outdoor lighting standards to adapt to LEDs. Narrow-spectrum amber LEDs (replacing low pressure sodium) have the least impact, and there are other lower-impact LED options as well. Important to note that for security lighting, brighter is not necessarily better; design has to be good to eliminate glare to make it effective. Mark will distribute some materials through Melissa.

Comment: You should educate HOAs because they're not always telling homeowners the correct information. Also Cromer elementary school seems to be out of compliance.

Answer: You're right about HOAs. Cromer's going through their permit process right now, as are all FUSD schools; this will eliminate millions of lumens when they're done.

Question: Have you addressed updates to the code?

Answer: They're currently being reviewed.

Comment: There's a proposal to eliminate lighting zone 3 and change those areas to lighting zone 2.

Question: Are there economic benefits from dark skies?

Answer: Astrotourism is popular, and may become more popular in dark-sky areas like Flagstaff as light pollution worsens.

Question: How can the public help?

Answer: Mark is the only compliance officer, so help is great. The most helpful things are to make complaints, educate your neighbors, and make your own property dark sky compliant. Help make opportunities for Mark to talk to the public.

Question: Do you look at particulate pollution as well?

Answer: No, lighting is part of the code; pollution is overseen by ADEQ and is outside of the scope of lighting enforcement.

David Wessell: MetroPlan and the Doney Park Area Plan

MetroPlan does transportation collaboration for a 525 square mile area surrounding Flagstaff, including DPTF. Implements transit, regional, and other plans. Evaluates potential transportation improvement projects to decide what goes forward. Responsible for federal transportation money that comes into the region. Evaluates social and environmental impacts. Speculates into the future about bus and rapid transit. Some hard limitations in the area are the railroad, Route 66, and Interstate-40. Estimate future growth areas. Planned projects that may affect DPTF area: interstate widening, expanding arterials to 4 lanes. There will be no bypass from the Highway 89-Townsend-Winona Rd intersection south to a new onramp to I-40 due to cultural impacts to Picture Canyon. The County is putting in wider shoulders for walking and biking. Walkability is being analyzed; MetroPlan could help the committee analyze this for the area plan. DPTF has fewer arterials per square mile than recommended. Flagstaff sometimes has trouble winning grant money because it's between urban and rural. The fuel tax, which is used for highway maintenance, hasn't been raised since 1991. The area plan could promote specific areas for attention. No major projects forecast or planned for DPTF area.

Question: Is the Silver Saddle-Highway 89 intersection a high-accident area, and could the area plan address that somehow? What are the other safety concerns that the plan could address?

Answer: Will get data to answer that question. Would be useful to identify areas of concern in the area plan and get public input. Evacuation planning is a concern in the event of an incident on I-40, 89 or the railroad.

Question: What about non-vehicular traffic and pedestrian access to trails?

Answer: Martin Ince talked about that, with the FTI and transportation master plan. Those will be considered in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

IV. Work session: Presentation Thoughts and Takeaways

Code enforcement

- Would like to see Coconino be like other cities and counties and let citizens report violations anonymously. Maybe the county or city itself could become the accuser instead of it having to be an individual, because violations are getting worse. This will help keep relations between neighbors peaceful. This is not in the auspices of the area plan, but county attorneys and staff. Maybe there would be a community movement where people are educated about the code and made to understand that things should be a certain way – spread this information to real estate agents, firemen, etc. in order to prevent problems in the first place. Can also reference the zoning code in the area plan to inform readers about it and encourage compliance.

Dark sky lighting

- Need more community education/awareness.
- Upcoming new county codes may address many lighting issues.
- Dark skies are very important to DPTF.
- DPTF has a DRO, so all commercial and industrial projects will have their lighting looked at.
- Quickly advancing lighting technology means there is no reason DPTF couldn't comply with Zone 2 requirements.
- There's lot of economic value and opportunities in dark skies, such as promoting astrotourism which we should make clear in the area plan, for example by vacation rentals. Therefore there's an economic incentive to enforce Zone 2 lighting standards.
- Appropriate narrow spectrum LED lighting can be very expensive for developers to install; however, costs of luminaires are going down all the time, while efficiency goes up.

MetroPlan

- Traffic congestion may be a good topic to address in the area plan.
- The area plan will be in effect for 10 to 20 years, and by then self-driving cars may be the norm, and they have the potential to reduce congestion and accidents.
- NAIPTA talked about mass transit and ride sharing for DPTF; they said promoting vanpools is currently the most viable alternative until/if the population of DPTF grows larger.

- Melissa will follow up with Dave to get more data and other information.
- We need to be looking at projected buildout over the next 20 years and think about how to plan effectively for the next 20 years, and then also the next 20 years beyond that.
- Doney Park Water considers DPTF to be very close to built out already. The community probably doesn't want the residential lots broken down into smaller lots, like 1-acre lots.
- In the area plan, we need to compare what we want for public transportation options, and maintaining the community as rural and sparsely populated. For example, do we want to offer other housing choices. Hard limitations, such as water, should be presented up front so we know what limitations we have.
- Plan for evacuation in the event of major events.

V. Public comments

None

VI. Wrap-up

Next Meeting is **July 9, 2020 via Zoom**

Planned topics:

- Horsemen Lodge
- County Finance 101
- Flagstaff Regional Plan, Activity Centers and Build Out

Meeting format going forward: The County probably won't have entered the phase of meeting with the public in person by the next meeting in July. CD staff will evaluate the situation each month, following Coconino County and CDC guidance, in order to decide what each meeting's format will be: online, in person, or a hybrid.

VII. Committee Final Thoughts

None