

## Emma Townsite Steering Committee Meeting – Jan. 21, 2020

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Jan. 21, 2020, 5:30pm – **Steering Committee Members:** Carolyn Shipp, Harry Teague, Martha Ferguson, Margaret Simmons, Matt Annabell, Michael Kinsley, Jason Smith, Mitzi Rapkin, Raul Gawrys, Sara Nadolny, Suzannah Reid **Open Space Staff:** Lindsey Utter, Jessie Young, Janet Urquhart **Members of Public:** Elizabeth Neckes, Doug Graybeal

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On Jan. 21, the group met at the Roaring Fork Conservancy in Basalt. Lindsey Utter said the draft recommendation on potential future use of the Emma Townsite buildings will go to the Open Space and Trails Board once the committee has approved it. If the board has questions or wants changes, they could be brought back to the committee. Eventually, the Board of County Commissioners will review the recommendation, she said. The recommendation would be used as a guide as the county judges proposals for use of the property.

The county occasionally receives proposals for the buildings; the committee is to provide guidance on what the community would like to see in the space, Utter said.

Matt Annabell asked if the committee would review future use proposals. The recommendation does not currently include that step; it could be added, Utter said.

Raul Gawrys suggested the old road east of the store buildings could accommodate some parking. Margaret Simmons said the development envisioned in the Basalt Master Plan will have huge traffic impacts in the midvalley. A new traffic study should be a condition for future proposed uses of the townsite, she said.

Jason Smith suggested the recommendation leave open the option for a proposal the committee has not thought about – he offered the example of a hat maker. It would be a light manufacturing use that would not draw a lot of traffic, Smith said. Utter suggested that use could fall under “heritage crafts.”

Simmons suggested a museum with a retail component such as a gift shop. Retail use is possible within the group’s draft recommendations, Utter said, such as agricultural sales from an agricultural use, or sales related to an artists’ cooperative. Carolyn Shipp said some revenue generators are needed in the buildings to help cover costs for something like a museum, suggesting small, one-person office uses, or housing in part of a building. Simmons suggested a non-profit use that could also pay rent.

Committee members indicated they would accept some small commercial uses. Sara Nadolny said it will be a challenge to make sure those uses don’t grow into larger commercial uses or generate too much traffic. Uses need to fit within CDOT’s limits on trip generation to and from the property, she said. Mitzi Rapkin reminded the group that incubator space has been discussed, as has event space, if transportation can be addressed.

Smith suggested the recommendation include potential uses, but also language that allows other uses that aren't specifically outlined in the document. For example: "Potential uses include, but are not limited to ... ."

Doug Graybeal noted the potential river access from the property and suggested a fly shop as a potential use. Harry Teague said a stairway could provide access between the buildings and the river despite a steep slope.

Michael Kinsley suggested the recommendation define potential uses versus those that cannot be accommodated by defining opportunities and constraints – what the group would like to achieve at the site versus what it wants to avoid.

The committee has indicated it would like to see multiple uses in the buildings, but what if a single great use that takes up the entire space is proposed, Smith asked. Suzannah Reid suggested making the recommendation more general – that community involvement with the space is what is desired. Something that creates a lot of traffic, for example, is not desired.

Gawrys said the recommendation should indicate what the committee wants, and offer a list of ideas, but make it clear the list is not all-inclusive. Annabell agreed.

Rapkin said the vision statement crafted by the group communicates what is desired of potential uses. Shipp said traffic issues limit community access and Ferguson said shuttle transportation will be key.

Rapkin asked how the committee's recommendation will be used. At present, the draft recommendation does not call for the release of an RFP (a formal Request for Proposals), Utter noted. Staff will tweak the recommendation based on the committee's feedback; ultimately, it will be used as a guiding document, she said. The recommendation is intended to represent a community vision for the buildings, Utter added.

Shipp said the recommendation needs to make clear why some uses are specifically not supported – because of the negative consequences they present. The document can make it clear the committee welcomes proposals for multiple uses in the buildings but retains the ability for a single-use proposal, Kinsley and Annabell said. Ferguson said the community may not have an opportunity to enjoy the buildings unless they contain multiple uses. Shipp expressed the need to get the buildings into a condition in which someone could finish them to make them useable. There are people with the financial resources to make the buildings useable, Ferguson said.

*Jason Smith departed at 6:40pm.*

Utter suggested opening the buildings to a studio project by architecture/planning students before an RFP process takes place, but asked committee members if they want to recommend an RFP process at the outset. The spaces need so much work that an RFP could be premature, Rapkin said. It would be better to solicit the student ideas first, Reid agreed. The studio project

is a less formal way to solicit ideas, Harry Teague said. Ferguson asked if a survey had been done to solicit public feedback. No, Utter responded.

*Margaret Ferguson departed at 6:53pm.*

The county could seek another grant to do work on the buildings and their interiors, including installing heat and electricity, Reid said. Shipp suggested tapping into Colorado Preservation, Inc. for ideas. Doug Graybeal noted a charrette involving local architects helped make the Third Street Center in Carbondale happen.

Nadolny predicted students involved in a studio project will focus on the river and asked if there are restrictions regarding uses that extend to the river. The land between the buildings and the riverbank is open space and there are restrictions on its use, Utter said. It can't be developed, she added. Teague suggested students focus on all of the property's attributes, which include the river, a bike path, osprey nest and fruit trees.

Utter said OST staff will revise the draft recommendation based on the committee feedback. Whether or not the committee will need to reconvene will be decided after the new draft is ready for input, she said.

Nadolny suggested OST present the recommendation, once it is ready, to the Basalt Town Council.

The meeting adjourned at about 7:07pm.