

Minutes
Town of Chino Valley
General Plan Committee
August 12, 2013

The General Plan Committee of the Town of Chino Valley, Arizona convened for a regular meeting on Monday, August 12, 2013 at 3:30 P.M. in the Chino Valley Council Chambers, located at 202 N. State Route 89, Chino Valley, Arizona.

Dava Hoffman, Dava & Associates, Inc., Consultant, called the meeting to order at 3:30 P.M.

Members Present: Ron Romley, Cheri Romley, Trisha Lamb, Nancy Best, Michael Edmonds, Robert McCaullay, Tom Payne, Frank Perkins, and John Morgan,

Members Absent: Celia Vander Molen, Edward Steinback, Norm Freeman, Dan McGuire.

Staff Present: Mary Brasher, Administrative Clerk and Town Planner, Ruth Mayday

Others Present: seven

1) WELCOME AND REVIEW

- Review of July 15, 2013 GPC Meeting Minutes – Accepted

Dava introduced the Town's new Planner, Ruth Mayday.

2) DISCUSSION:

- Presentation on Trails network in Prescott and the Region by George Sheats, Coordinator for the Over-the-Hill-Gang.

Mr. Sheats gave a brief presentation explaining what the Over-the-Hill-Gang does and the volunteers that make this group successful. He stated he was also on the General Plan Committee for the City of Prescott and there was a sub-committee for Trails. Over a 12 month period the trails committee, which is comprised of approximately 60-80 participants, various non-profit groups, and other groups have come together to set priorities and establish goals for the trails system.

Mr. Sheats explained the different aspects involved with planning, building, and financial resource's needed to build trails. The City of Prescott has a trails coordinator technician who designs the trail alignments and then directs the volunteers to the working locations.

The trails are not just built for recreational purposes, mentioned in the Open Space Element, but also are a part of the Circulation Element in the General Plan for access to various areas.

The Trails Committee has several goals; however, they are primarily looking at Prescott and its connecting trails, and they try and bring in other jurisdictions so they do not overlook something that may be important. A Regional Trail System would be an ultimate goal, but will require the coordination, and cooperation of several jurisdictions, private property owners, as well as funding resources. Getting the Peavine Trail connected from Prescott to Chino Valley along the old railroad right-of-way is something the Trails Committee would like to see accomplished, but there is one 3 mile section that is privately owned and so far the owners are not willing to allow the public access.

Eric Smith, City of Prescott Parks Department, provided information on the background of the Peavine Trail. The Town of Chino Valley purchased a +/-7mile portion of the Peavine with State Heritage funds in the early 1990s. In the late 1990s, Prescott acquired a portion of the Peavine right-of-way through the Rails-to-Trails program. Both portions of the Peavine plus the Iron King Trail in Prescott Valley comprise approximately 18 miles of trail.

Ms. Hoffman commented that state statutes require state, county, and local jurisdictions to consider Regional Connections in the Open Space Element. The 3 miles of the Peavine that is in the County may provide the opportunity to get into a conversation for accomplishing these regional connections.

Yavapai County Supervisor Craig Brown commented that this issue has been around awhile and there is a vision for bike trails, equestrian areas, and other activities, but the fact is it all boils down to acquiring resources to bring it all together. Governmental agencies need to be involved, and getting cooperation from these local various agencies has not been very successful.

Mr. Sheats continued the discussion showing Committee members photos of volunteers of the Over-the-Hill-Gang building trails and explained that the group is not a formalized organization, but a diverse group of people who care about the health and welfare of our trails.

Dava asked if the Over-the-Hill-Gang would be interested in doing work outside of the Prescott area. Mr. Sheats stated that the Over-the-Hill-Gang is not a formalized organization and will work on trails wherever there is a need.

Cheri Romley asked how they get authorization to work on City property, and the liability that goes along with that. Mr. Sheats stated that the properties in question are intended for that type of use and so red tape is avoided; and some safety training is provided, and volunteers are expected to use common sense and work safely.

Discussions continued regarding how trail systems tie into circulation, transportation, private property, wildlife, and open space, and the value of these systems to communities.

Paul Katan, Yavapai County Community Health Services, commented that he is part of a state wide initiative to improve public health outcomes through policy systems and environmental change. This means making it an easy choice where we live, work, and play and Chino Valley can do that by making plans to make it easier for residents to maintain their health. This includes various transportation venues, as well as safe recreational options, and the combination of both.

Mr. Katan commented that he is also a volunteer for the Prescott Mountain Bike Alliance, which is a trails organization for non-motorized trail access, and felt that the volunteers associated with these groups have a tremendous positive impact on communities.

- Discussion with Yavapai County District 4 Supervisor Craig Brown.
 - Update on future Williamson Valley Road – Reed Road Connector.
 - Potential regional trails and open space networks.

Mr. Brown stated that the first project for the widening of Hwy 89 South is from the south end of Chino Valley to James Ranch Road; and a new roundabout will be installed at approximately Rd 5 South. Apparently the Town of Chino Valley will be bringing Rd 1 East down to that point. The concern is getting ADOT to do what is called the South project which runs from James Ranch/Deep Well Ranch Rd to Hwy 89A. At the same time the City of Prescott and Yavapai County have agreed in principal to have money earmarked for a connector road that will be realigning Willow Creek Rd. Willow Creek will be rerouted to connect with SR 89 at Deep Well Ranch Rd. So far ADOT has not put that on their 5 year plan, but the County is proceeding as if ADOT will because they know if the paperwork is ready when the money becomes available, then the project can be an overnight start.

The other future major road alignment that has been discussed is the Great Western Highway which may start at Prescott Valley's water tank at SR 89A, going north and then west, and will eventually end at Rd 5 South. The issue is funding and the fact that most of that is private property that would need to be obtained.

The other future roadway area is the east/west corridor that runs from Williamson Valley Rd. to Reed Rd/Center St. This alignment appears to be the straightest route, least amount of engineering, as well as the most economical. This road would follow the state land section boundaries in order to minimize the impact to private properties. This 2 lane road will only touch about 8 parcels of private property and will not impact wildlife or other activities on state land.

This route will enable residents in the Williamson Valley area easier access to Chino Valley in order to do business. This extension will provide another route for emergency evacuations of residents if needed, and allow a shorter distance from Chino Valley to Prescott for ambulance transportation when minutes are crucial. Supervisor Brown also stated they are looking at other egress routes that will allow people to get out in the event of fires and other emergency situations.

Committee members discussed the necessity of adding walking and biking paths along areas when the road is being created or widened, such as Highway 89, because currently it is unsafe for bicyclist and other pedestrians.

Mr. Brown stated a bike lane on the side of Peavine Trail would be an asset as well; however, all of this costs money which is hard to obtain; volunteers do a great job, but it's not enough to do everything.

Committee members thought there must be funding available from somewhere. Mr. Brown stated that Federal funding has different and stricter requirements than other funding sources. He stated they avoid using Federal funds because of the higher cost and restrictions.

Committee members continued to discuss the regulations for bike paths and other multi use paths along roadways. Maintenance of these paths is also a consideration, as well as the cost of construction and the safety of riders. References were made to the construction of bike paths in different areas of Arizona and other states. The Committee discussed the need for more bicycle friendly areas in Town, especially for kids to go back and forth to school and other activities.

They discussed the need for several smaller roads to enable traffic a variety of ways in and out of their communities. The problem with this is residents expect these roads to be paved and in many cases they are private roads and not the responsibility of the County.

Ms. Hoffman commented that the Committee should think about adding some policy statements about providing a series of access routes for emergency use. The idea could be to have a series of compacted, dirt roads that connect different parts of Town to different places in order to move people out quickly in the event of an emergency.

Committee members also discussed flooding issues and roadways that cross large drainage areas. When there is flooding many residents get isolated and emergency vehicles are not able to get to those that may need help. The recent flooding in Paulden is a prime example of this type of situation.

- General discussion of parks, recreation and Open Space.

Yavapai County Development Services Director, Steve Mauk, and Planner Tammy DeWitt, discussed the Greater Prescott Trails Planning, a collaborative effort of interested trail users. Currently there are several non-profit organizations as well as agencies including the Prescott National Forest, Yavapai County, the City of Prescott and the Town of Prescott Valley. The region is divided into 5 subareas. Subarea "E" covers most of Chino Valley, Prescott and Prescott Valley. Subarea E is generally bounded on the south by SR 69/Gurley St/Iron Springs Rd, on the west by Williamson Valley Road, on the north by Perkinsville Rd, and on the east/northeast by Peavine Trail/SR 89A.

3) **COMMENTS** - Pertaining to the General Plan

- Committee comments:

Committee members discussed the procedures for getting on an election ballot for the General Plan update and the problems associated with it. Committee members asked when they needed their work done for the GP. Ms. Hoffman stated that they lost 6 months mainly because of her work load in providing other services to the Town, and that the change in the election law may be causing a delay for a ratification election. Dava will contact the Town Clerk to find out the new election dates.

Ms. Hoffman stated they still have to discuss Open Space, Cost of Development, Water Resources, and Environmental Planning Elements. They also need to draft policies to go along with the three goals that the Committee has set. The idea is to keep the number of goals short so that the community and elected officials can really use them. Committee members commented that if these meetings continue for too long, many members will not be able to continue due to other commitments. The other concern is that the longer it goes on the easier it will be to forget things.

Committee members mentioned that it doesn't appear as if the citizens have been included in many of the decisions that Town has made regarding developments and other changes that have been made. Many were concerned with the current Council and the internal squabbles which show there is no direction. They were concerned about the flow of information with Town officials, management and employees, and the fact that there is no real Human Resources Department. Great concern was expressed about the medical marijuana situation in Town and that the Town needs to set policies regarding these facilities.

Ruth Mayday stated that it was her understanding that the Town Council made the decision to let the state regulate these facilities. Staff cannot make policy changes without Council direction, so if citizens want policy changes, then they will need to go to Council and tell them what is wanted. Council directs the Town Manager for the changes they want to see, and then the Town Manager will instruct staff. Dava commented that citizens could approach Council at the public portion of a meeting and request a workshop or some other public format to discuss these issues.

- Public comments: None

4) **NEXT STEPS**

- Homework: None
- Next Meeting – September 9, 2013.

5) **ADJOURN** – 6:45 p.m.