

Pojoaque Valley Planning Committee Meeting Notes
June 24th, 2004, 6:30-8:30pm
PVC Administrative Building

The committee started the meeting around 6:45 pm. The meeting was facilitated by Vicente Roybal-Jasso. He was assisted by Jack Kolkmeyer, Santa Fe County Planning Director, and Renee Villarreal, Planning Graduate Intern.

Vicente brought up that Nambe had a clean up day earlier in the month. Diane Boissevain she said that this could be a way to get more participation for our meetings. She said that if we had a social event, for instance, if we had a picnic or other get together, this might be a way to stir up interest. This would help to get people more involved and to get to know one another better.

Jack reminded the group that the next meeting will be held July 8th. Elizabeth Keating from LANL will be giving a presentation about the origins of the water we drink. Collaboration with the Water Alliance for this meeting will take place. Jack also talked about the handouts that were available for the meeting. In particular, he mentioned that the updated flow chart on the strategic planning process is where we would like to be at this point in the strategic planning process.

Jack talked about the Pojoaque Valley Wastewater Study Regional Advisory Group meeting that was held earlier that day. The main focus of the meeting was about collaboration with the different entities at the table to resolve wastewater issues. The group also talked about how to make decisions and work with each other.

Other members in the PVPC also commented on the wastewater meeting. From a data standpoint, the advisory group acknowledged the need to get accurate information about contaminated water sources in the area. Right now the data is skewed and it is hard to determine what areas are most crucial. It was also discussed how the nitrate situation in water sources may be masked by soil conditions. These are the issues about testing that need to be resolved with the water testing fairs and more accurate data collection.

Steve Benjamin's commented, based on his feelings of the wastewater meeting, that it was clear we must engage ourselves in land use and what mandates are required for traditional communities. He also stated that we need to understand the relationships with density land use patterns as it relates to wastewater/water initiatives.

Jack told the committee about the Galisteo community meeting that was held the past weekend. This planning group had an amazing scenario experience that engaged the stakeholders of the area, and there was a lot of enthusiasm in the group. He would like to see the PVPC members that participated in the scenario development come back to the meetings. Those members and anyone else on the committee that would like to participate and try to integrate and rework the scenarios he thinks would be very helpful for the planning process. Especially since we will be looking at strategies for the various SWOTs and the scenarios the committee has come up with thus far. We will

reconvene the group and talk about how we want to proceed, but in the meantime, please let Jack know if you are still interested in participating.

Beth Mills, Santa Fe County Planner then spoke about mapping for the committee. Beth works in the Planning Division and dedicates most of her time focusing on GIS and cartography. She came to the meeting to clarify and collect input on what items the committee would like to include in the mapping and boundary issues concerning the Valley. She asked the group where they would like to see the mapping go in Pojoaque. Her suggestions included mapping at a 600 ft. in order to get a better depiction of the area. Also she said the map (that she brought with her) already shows roads, waterways, river beds/arroyos and existing acequias. She wants to determine how the acequias have changed over time and how they will be part of the landscape in the future.

In the meeting Beth showed us a map that delineated boundaries in which the County has jurisdiction. She stated that she wants to consider mapping as it pertains to the watershed. This will show the interconnections and boundaries as it relates to the natural landscape.

David Ortiz pointed out that the Pueblo wants to see what we define as our boundaries so we can clarify areas and correct discrepancies.

Beth said currently we are exchanging information in the County GIS office with the Pueblos. It's a trust building relationship and they are making progress. This collaboration of the data will create a more accurate picture of the Valley.

Beth said her suggestion to the committee would be to create a map that doesn't necessarily focus on the political boundaries; the planning boundaries would focus on the watershed instead. The focus will be taken away from the square boundaries set by the government, and as Jack said, it will look at the health of the watershed. This would actually be one way that we could take a closer look at the loss of agricultural land. This approach would extend the thinking about regional planning work at a conceptual and workable scale.

Jack also mentioned that looking at the boundaries in this way has a lot to do with land use planning because settlement patterns have a direct relationship to the watershed.

Steven Benjamin said that this is how the Sangre de Cristo Regional Water Plan was written – in the context of the watershed.

Elaine Best stated that the planning committee started these meetings with the intention that we would define the boundaries. She said that we must address this issue because it has been a really important issue to this committee and the community.

Jack responded that we would not drop the issue of boundaries. Elaine stated that maybe the approach to take should be from a top/down approach – that is, take the Pueblos' boundaries and ours and see where they mesh or do not. Beth stated that we will not be throwing out the boundaries all together necessarily.

Vicente said either way we need to come up with solutions. If we can pull this off, it would be great.

Doug Crosby reiterated the importance of addressing the health of the watershed because it will fall along the lines of achieving our mission. He recommended that we somehow add to the vision the importance of the watershed.

The group also stated that they want a scaled down copy to take a look at the different levels of ownership. Beth said that the map was created with GPS coordinates and that she used USGS and aerial photos to get the map she was showing us.

Don Bustos then began his discussion on agricultural preservation. He had previously looked at the SWOT the group had come up with, and there were a few things he thought we should add, or that he thought we needed to clarify.

He first started off by commenting on the key facts that we provided on the matrix were pretty accurate for northern New Mexico. He specifically pointed out that the agricultural plot sizes, although irrigated parcels of less than 10 acres has increased, that these sizes of parcels are good to promote sustainable agriculture practices. Don mentioned that under the types of agricultural uses that we should add “year round production”. In regards to income from agricultural activity, he said the \$50,000 income per acre for intensive organic farms is a reasonably attainable goal. He said that we should include the added value – there is an international market for NM products. Other countries are seeking out chile and salsa to name a few. We need to capitalize on this.

Don also felt that some of the strengths we should include in our SWOT should be:

- Political strength through grassroots initiatives
- Sense of security – knowing where a product is coming from
- Taste of grass-fed animal meat is a lot better
- Stimulation of local economy – circulation of capital
- Year round production – conserves water because there is less water use and less evaporation. Plus there is a higher market value for products during “off season” times

Don also suggested that we include in the following opportunities:

- Open up government land for sustainable communities
- Food security – especially with globalization and homeland security

Don felt that we should rethink the idea of agriculture as “hard work” under “Threats”. He stated that with new techniques and equipment makes agricultural practices more efficient. And working the land doesn’t mean that you have to make it a full time job – it can act as a way to supplement your income.

The group, with the help of Don began looking at more initiatives and strategies that fall under the preservation of agricultural practices.

One area in particular that the group talked about at length was the feasibility of a local farmer’s market in the Valley. Don says that this trend is gaining great momentum

across the US. He said there are about 1,200 farmer's markets nationwide, which has been about a 15-20% increase. He said that smaller markets tend to be more profitable. However the first couple years is usually a struggle to get a market off the ground for various reasons:

- Location and accessibility to the site
- Time of the week – Wednesdays and Fridays seem to be strong days
- Awareness/Marketing
- Importance of adding an entertainment component
- Need good organization!

Don also mentioned how the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) programs or similar programs can add to the success of the market when there is collaboration.

These are some of the other points that were also discussed:

- Designing Cisterns
- Researching what studies NMSU has done in regards to winter production
- Education – implementing 2 year programs focusing on agriculture as a profession
- Awareness of natural resources and its limitations
- Agricultural Programs – not enough information is being shared
 - We get lip service from the Feds about the importance of small farms, yet they cut the budget that supports them.
 - Especially for farms that are 10-200 acres
- Awareness through Education:
 - Environmental issues
 - Local products and their nutritional value
 - How agriculture relates to values – social, environmental, family
- Local and national economical advantage
 - Through subsidies
- Homeland Security
 - Dependence on foreign oil
 - Resilience of food supply
- Community Farms – need a strategy!
 - Teaching programs
 - Cooperatives – like SF Family Farms Market
 - Equipment co-ops

Last, the group talked about how we could start incorporating a snack break back into the meetings. During these breaks it gives the group an opportunity to interact with other members. Also the committee asked if the County could have an email sent out the day of the meeting as another reminder about the evening meetings. The group talked about creating signs around town and at intersections to publicize about the meetings. It was also mentioned that using the marquee near the Jacona campus would be a good way to get the word out.

The meeting concluded at 8:30pm.

Notes taken by Renee Villarreal