

Pojoaque Valley Planning Committee Meeting Summary

Thursday, October 13th, 2005 6:30pm – 8:30pm

Sammy Quintana Community Board Room

(Note: This is a meeting summary and is not intended to give the meeting contents in its entirety. If you would like to get more details about the meeting, please contact another committee member that was present at the meeting, or the SF County Planning staff.)

The meeting started at about 6:35 pm. David Dogruel chaired the meeting and was assisted by Jack Kolkmeier and Renee Villarreal from Santa Fe County.

The meeting began with discussions and reports of events since the previous meeting.

Trail, COLTPAC

Levi brought us up-to-date on the status of our request to COLTPAC for a hiking trail. Jack and Renee made a presentation about the trail at the last COLTPAC meeting.

Jack and Renee showed us a topographic map with a tentative route for the trail, and Levi traced the route on a different map that showed ownership of the area. The proposed trail is a loop about 7.5 miles long, starting and ending at the high school. Part of the trail is the route currently used by the Pojoaque Schools Cross Country team. The trail goes through the Jacona Land Grant, goes slightly into BLM land, just touches the border of San Ildefonso Pueblo land and goes through part of Pojoaque Pueblo's land. Jack said that there are other trail options that may not exactly follow the route that he and Renee tentatively outlined. The County needs to GPS it. We discussed the need for a route to cut across the loop to create an option for a shorter loop, and also the possibility of lengthening the trail so that it would go into Buckman Road and Diablo Canyon.

COLTPAC received the request favorably, and gave us a green light to pursue it, with the stipulation that more research is done about what land the trail would cross into. Some of the concerns expressed by COLTPAC were whether the trail would be used by the general public, and what the types of usage would be. The proposed trail would be good for hikers, and possibly bicycles. In its current state it would probably not be suitable for horses. Dirt bikes and ATVs would be banned. COLTPAC also asked who would maintain the trail. Mary Lou commented that the cross-country team currently keeps its trail immaculate. COLTPAC is interested in supporting the trail by contributing money for easements or construction. We hope that the Pueblos and the Land Grant will contribute the easements so that the money can go for construction. Renee said that she had a conversation with Lt. Governor Leon Roybal from San Ildefonso Pueblo and he was supportive of the idea. However more details will need to be worked out, especially concerning liabilities and right of way access. The Lt. Governor was willing to have his GIS staff person possibly join us when we decide to GPS the area.

Levi will estimate the expenses. Expenses might include signage, markers, later improvements for bicycles and horses, and a place for spectators to view the end of a race, which will be located at the track area.

Farmers' Market

Mary Lou reported that the Farmers' Market is going well, with seven vendors present this week.

Tennis Court

Don Wilson wrote a letter of thanks regarding the Tennis Court. Renee circulated copies for us to sign. She will distribute the letters to the appropriate staff who helped make it happen.

Presentation to Marissa Stone

The group presented a bouquet of roses and a certificate of appreciation in a beautiful tin frame to Marissa in recognition of the excellent job she has done reporting about us for the New Mexican. Amelia Garcia, Diane Boissevain, David D., and Renee were instrumental in putting this award together, getting the signed card, and buying the flowers. Marissa thanked us and said it had been a pleasure to write about such a concerned community.

Action Plans

We completed the discussion of the comments from the community forum on our action plans.

1. Youth Action Plans

Jack remarked that many of the ideas are useful, but that if we don't clarify who is supposed to follow-up on them and how the follow-up will be done, the ideas will go nowhere. Elaine suggested that the Valley Council could organize a committee to follow-up on these projects. David D. suggested that we leverage on existing successful youth programs, and that the community center would provide a venue for some of these programs. Mary Lou offered to find out what extra-curricular activities currently exist.

The discussion of the Youth Action plan got people thinking more about the proposed community center.

Chuck expressed concerns about how we are going to pay for and maintain the community center. David D. said that the County will make a long-term commitment. Also, some things in the Community Center will be self-supporting. Mary Lou suggested that having a day care center there might help support it. Chuck suggested that in the future we brainstorm about ways to make the Center self-supporting. Mary Lou said that some of us are going to have to write grant proposals. She has experience in this area. Jack said that Community Centers are sometimes rented, with fees going to the County. The County then maintains the Community Center. Ben said that the El Rancho Community Center functions this way, but is too small for our needs.

Jack said that our Plan should lay out what the Community Center will be so that the Commissioners can understand what their commitment would be. He thought we might be able to get some money to hire an architect to draw what the community center might be like.

There was discussion about creating a Youth Council and about getting young people involved. David O. said that it can be hard to get students to participate in this sort of thing. Chuck said that he had started a Red Cross youth group that was very successful. Renee suggested getting the UNM Architecture School students involved by making the Community Center design a school project. Chuck mentioned that we could have kids interact with the Seniors. David O. said that this was the approach used in the presentation to the school board. Lynn Velasco suggested that kids could get school credit for social service.

We then took a break, and enjoyed some great snacks brought by committee members.

2. Land Issues

Jack commented that we need to look at the problems people reported and either increase enforcement or change the law. We need to make it easy for people to find out what the land use laws are.

We discussed family transfers. Jack suggested the possibility of compounds as a way to keep generations of families living on their land. The houses could be close together, leaving open

land for agriculture. This is not currently permitted. Lynn asked if compounds would require alternative wastewater systems. Jack said that the County passed a bond issue a few years ago for wastewater. He wondered if the County could use this money to help people hook up to the Pojoaque Pueblo system, thus allowing higher densities. Mary Lou commented that if we allow high density, all of our ideas about preserving rural character might be lost. Carl said that the demographics suggest that we will have more people and more old people. Condos with open space would be a good option for these people. David O. remarked that if our plan did not allow family transfers, the plan would be killed. Too many people would not accept this. However, the compound option would be a good solution.

Wil Roybal, the president of the Jacona Land Grant attended this meeting. He said that family transfers, as they are now, do not work to keep people in the Valley because the lots become too small. The Land Grant is currently restricted to 2, 5, and 10-acre lot sizes. He suggested making the Land Grant boundaries, or at least part of it, part of the Traditional Community. We would need to bring water to the Valley so there can be growth in this area. He also suggested minimizing the lot size requirements throughout the Land Grant. He argued that the original purpose of the Land Grant was to provide places for descendants of the original settlers to live. Therefore he feels it is reasonable to open for people to build on. Currently about 500 acres of the Land Grant are in the Traditional Community boundary, out of 6,800 acres that are left from the original land grant.

David O. commented that changing the lot sizes in the Land Grant would solve the land problem but not the water problems. He added that the only reason people develop on agricultural land is because no other land is available. For that reason, making land from the Grant available is appealing.

Jack said that the boundaries of a Traditional Community have only been changed once, but that it might be possible to do it again in Pojoaque's case.

Future Meetings

We agreed to have the next meeting on Thursday, October 20 because Jack and Renee will be out of town on the 27th. We will learn more about the current Land Use laws at this meeting.

Renee brought up the issue of focus groups in the communities. Everyone needs to help set up focus groups in their neighborhoods. We all agreed that it was going to be hard to get this done in November. Mary Lou suggested that December might be possible.

Notes by E.B. and R.V.