

Pojoaque Valley Planning Committee Meeting Notes
December 2nd, 2004 6:30pm – 8:30pm
PV Administrative Building

The meeting started at 6:40pm. David Dogruel chaired the meeting, with the assistance of Jack Kolkmeier, Planning Director for SF County, and Renee Villarreal, Community Planner. David Dogruel asked for a recap of the Water Alliance meeting that was held on the 1st and any other announcements that people had from the committee. Levi Valdez said that he was very impressed with lawyer Fred Waltz that will now be representing the Water Alliance. Waltz had people sign up if they wanted him to represent them. The lawyer said that he would not bill individuals, but be paid by the Alliance with donations to fund the cause. Waltz has represented other legal adjudication suits in Taos, Questa, Peñasco, and land grants for individuals. Levi was impressed by his knowledge of Spanish and Mexican land and water laws.

Donald Wilson was encouraged by Waltz because he wanted to take a multi-level approach. The attorney said that he would like to not only take a political approach and get Congress involved, but also meet with the various parties involved in the case – the State Engineers, The County, the Pueblos, and the City of Santa Fe. Waltz said that he understands each of the parties' positions and has a relationship with them, but wants to represent the Alliance. The attorney felt that they should not go to trial, and wants to do his best to negotiate the settlement. Levi said that Waltz is going to try to ask for an extension of the March 2005 deadline. The attorney has several approaches that he is considering and Levi said he seemed to be a down-to-earth person. Jack asked what would be the reality of an extension. Levi said that Waltz seemed to think that he could get one. David asked if he could forward on or make copies of the handouts that were given out at the meeting.

Mary Louise Williams announced that the County Open Lands and Trails Planning and Advisory Committee (COLTPAC) has an opening for a committee member. She can no longer serve since her term is up and was hoping that somebody from the Valley would apply for the job, especially since Vicente Roybal-Jasso is no longer on the committee either. COLTPAC is responsible for wisely using taxpayer's money to purchase open space. The committee meetings are held every two weeks. Jack said that it might be interesting to get someone from the public schools to take on this role – it would be a really good fit, especially with this idea of creating a cross-country trail.

David discussed the website updating and what kinds of changes that Renee and Jack were going to make. He passed out the current list of committee members that were placed on the website and asked the committee to update and correct their information, and if the committee members would indicate if they would like to be a contact for their community if anyone has questions about the PVPC. These people would not be representatives or a spokesperson for their community, but would be available to answer questions about what we do and how we do it. Doug asked since he does not live in a traditional community, if he could be a contact for the Pojoaque Pueblo since he lives there.

Jack reminded the group that the next meeting Carl Moore was going to be with us to pull everything back together and see what the committee has accomplished. Jack asked that the committee call other people to attend – especially those people that have been a part of the committee at one time or another.

David said that redesigning the website will also answer why we are planning, the reasons to plan, and what we do in meetings. The website should also reflect what progress we have made, and also show the SWOTs when the final form gets firmed up.

Renee said that if anyone had specific changes, to please let her know. The committee can see what has been updated so far at: www.santafecounty.org and click onto “Community Planning” under “Hot Links”. David said he hopes that we could add a link that gives an example of an already completed community plan so we can see what it looks like.

Donald said he would like to select people that the committee would try to contact because he feels that so much has changed in this committee and people do not realize how much progress we have made. David said that the question is are people getting the information and ignoring it, or are they not receiving anything. We need to talk to these people. David said that we should try to explain to people what the benefit of planning is, especially around difficult issues or diverse groups.

David also announced that he talked with the Pojoaque Tribal Police and they told him that they are actively watching for taggers and graffiti. If any one has any information to pass along to them it would help them out. Amelia Garcia said they caught a father and son tagging together, however they were not prosecuted and the incident wasn't even reported in the paper. They were taken to court, but only slapped on the hand.

The group went over the Water SWOT to make sure there weren't any more changes or questions. David said that what the County hydrologist presented was very good information, especially the water testing results. It was interesting to find out that nitrate is not necessarily as big a threat as people have stated. Carlos Ortiz suggested some changes to the key facts that talks about how as the water table goes down, so does the source of water for irrigation from the wells. The facts were missing that the use of ground water is for irrigation. Steve Benjamin stated that there is a misconception – there is additional use that one might not expect – that irrigation is not just from surface water sources.

The committee took a break, and then started in on the Actions and Strategies for water. There were three things the group discussed: a true centralized water/wastewater system; a combination of septic tank use and also a decentralized system; and to keep all septic systems, and have centralized management of them. Some people made suggestions to add to the opportunities.

Jack stated that when you look at patterns of traditional communities, the density is usually about 3½ dwelling units per acre. In the past, rural did not mean density, but more about centralized clustered dwellings. The committee needs to look at - What growth do you want that fits in with the rural character; and what systems and patterns

come along to achieve this. The strategy that you come up with will force the Valley to make tough decisions about what should be priority. David clarified and said that based on the SWOTS we need to think about how do we want to manage growth. Steve asked if we were talking about controlling density. He added that rural can be a loaded word with many meanings relating to agriculture and space. Jack said that he was referring to family transfers and how they function in the Valley.

Carlos said it is about water availability – he said of the four acres he owns he only has enough water to irrigate at the most, one acre. Whether the land is irrigable or not, the water is not there. That area could hold 15 to 20 additional families with the density requirement – and that’s good money, especially if land is going for \$100,000/acre in Jacona. As older residents leave, kids are left with the land, and they are not interested in keeping up the garden or any type of agriculture.

Jack said that we need to look at the facts – what potential growth there is and how this will lead to the need for a wastewater system. There is an economic commodity tied in with land and family transfers. Donald asked how the family transfers work. Jack said that the land you transfer has to be in the family for at least five years – and the land can only be passed to immediate family members. The minimum level of subdividing can go down to 1/3 of an acre.

The group talked about other ways of preserving land – Transfer of Development Rights, Beneficial farms, and Conservation Easements. Jack said it all comes down to what you want to protect; what parts of the community should not be developed. Carlos said that people are conflicted because they don’t want their neighbors to subdivide, but yet they want to have all the flexibility in the world to do what they want with their property. David added that growth should happen where growth makes sense. Commissioner Montoya added to the discussion that there are requirements for subdividing, but you have to prove that you have the water in the area.

Carlos asked if we will cover anything in the community plan to figure out ways to get more water for irrigation purposes. David said not yet, but this is a possibility, however we need to identify preliminary sources of water. Carlos added that Cuyamungue runs out of water and if they do not use their domestic wells for irrigation, they won’t get water. Levi pointed out that the mission does state that we would want to develop ordinances that prevent loss of agricultural lands and revitalizes agricultural activity.

Amelia said that funding would be most valuable as a way of attacking these issues. She added that we cannot just keep talking and we need to strategize. Mary Louise said that there is also a lot of private monies to consider. Levi said all of this is another reason to keep wells to water our gardens.

The meeting concluded at 8:45pm.

Notes by R.V.