

Pojoaque Valley Planning Committee Meeting Notes
December 9th, 2004 6:30pm – 8:30pm
PV Administrative Building

The meeting started at 6:40pm. David Ortiz chaired the meeting, with the assistance of Jack Kolkmeyer, Planning Director for SF County, and Renee Villarreal, Community Planner. David O. said that David Dogruel called to say that he could not attend because he was trapped in Los Alamos because of a fatal accident and that there may be other people that would not make the meeting because of the accident.

Jack started off the meeting by introducing facilitator Carl Moore and his colleague, Lynne Canning that would start helping to facilitate meetings as the PVPC is getting closer to developing strategies for the community plan. Jack said that he hopes that the committee can look towards having a community wide meeting in the early spring, and then wrap things up in the summer. Jack added that it is important that the scenario people come back to the meetings since we will be going back to scenario development. We want to acknowledge all the work that has been done and to see what we need to re-evaluate in the process.

Jack added that it has been fun and exciting working with Carl in the past because he is not a planner. He has a lot of experience as a facilitator (see bio sheet) and has done four or five projects with Jack. He approaches projects as problem solving; he tries to slice through the problem and find out what the essence of the problem is. Sometimes this can be uncomfortable because of cultural, political and other social differences. What we need to do is re-engage the process and get more people involved.

Carl Moore introduced himself and Lynne Canning, saying they were privileged to be working with the PVPC. He said the goal of this meeting was to ask a lot of questions and share what little he has gathered from the work already done by the committee. As he referred to the chart of what has been accomplished, he said they would like to try to draw a picture of what the committee has done, and what they would like to do. He then began talking about the timeline presented to the group. Earlier in the planning process, the group had discussed key community issues. Then the groups split up – some people worked on the internal analyses, which the SWOT analyses were developed from, and others worked on the external analyses, which the initial scenarios came out of. Of these elements is what will create a strategic plan, which is what the committee agreed to do from the beginning – as opposed to a comprehensive plan.

Carl M. stated that he believes that representative democracy dulls public participation. The question is how does one engage the public so that you have work that is honored, but at the same time other input is included and validated. Now the question is how do we move forward from here?

Carl M. gave a handout that gave a set of assumptions taken from the work done by the committee. He stated that if the group wanted a valid public process, certain responsibilities would come with involving the public. It is the responsibility of the committee and the County to get more of the public involved because the more

contributions will influence the decisions. Mary Louise Williams asked if this would reverse the process of moving forward and asked what else could we have done to get more people to participate.

Carl Berney said that up until this point the committee has been putting things on paper, but no decisions have been made. The next stage will be the point where decisions are going to be made and people will be more engaged in the process. The people are more sensitive because of the Aamodt settlement. We need to be careful that we don't get caught up in the settlement, especially because of the Aamodt, some community people think that we are holding secret meetings with this committee even though we publicize them all the time. Carl M. added that if the committee wanted more people to come out to the meetings, the public needs to be given the information in an understandable way. He is pretty optimistic that there are ways to get more participation. He said that he has made the assumption that this process will utilize the work the committee has done thus far, and then the community will let us know what they think. The information needs to be in a language that the public understands – in a visually interactive form. We will need the help of the New Mexican to publicize. Carl M. thinks that in order to get more participation, there needs to be smaller meetings – maybe living room meetings that can take place within the community.

Levi Valdez asked why we would go through all of this when anybody can come and are welcome to the meetings. What would be the reason to educate them to come and participate when they haven't done so the past couple years? Carl M. said that even so, we need to try to get more people involved. Narciso said that we need to simplify the process to make it more interesting. It was very difficult for people because it was confusing and hard work. A group member said that if we work at the juncture of government and elected officials, then we are more likely to get these officials to see the importance of planning by the number of people that we can get involved. We need to be encouraged to do outreach.

Levi said that this committee that participates now is the public. He does not feel one bit guilty that we are the ones that are going to make the decisions because no one else is willing to come out and participate. Doug Crosby added that we have done the grunt work and in good faith. So if we present a finalized product and invite community to comment on it, some people will be engaged, and others will not and never will. Carl B. added that the number of people we may add to the group will be small, but it is important to present the information to the community to let them know what we are working on and towards.

Carl M. said that he has worked on rural issues in NM for the last 10 years; three years in Catron County with the public. In this time period, he learned that people come in and out of meetings, but when it became real, people started to attend because there were consequences involved. Levi said that it should be more of an information meeting, rather than a recruitment meeting. If people want to participate then that is even better. Carl M. added that there is a huge complexity in the work the committee has done especially to try to translate it to the public and the committee. But it's an effort that must be done. There are lots of ways to respond to work. Carl M. gave examples of other ways he was able to do this. He commended the committee for

going through the learning together – that is why the committee has been able to get things accomplished together. Carl M. said that's why he thinks the New Mexican would be key to all of this; they could really help to get their collaboration in order to get the message out. Carl M. reminded the group that with strategic planning it is not possible to plan for every contingency but to focus on what can be done or affected.

Mary Louise said that the community has not been made aware of what we have accomplished as a committee. How do we verbalize and show this to the community. The things that have already been accomplished that have come out of this committee have been the implementation of speed bumps, junk cars are being dealt with through ordinance, and we are tackling the graffiti issue head on. Carl M. said that these are all indications that planning matters. A committee member said that organizing a community clean up was where we were able to get people together. Diane Boissevain added that working side by side one another in the cleanup and in future cleanups would be an opportunity to talk to people about how important community planning is and attending the meetings.

David O. said that in almost every case, there are always a few people that do the work, and a lot of people that react to the work. Carl M. said this is typical to get a lot more people and then to dwindle down to a core group also. He added that in his experience if you can engage community to at least have them know what is going on. The committee is that much better off to remain transparent.

Carl B. said that the committee is at a pivotal point; we have been doing more of a data collection process, but haven't specifically tried to come to real conclusions or strategies. He added that it is important to let the community know where we are, what we are doing, and where we are going. We are challenged to get the plan in a form that has clarity – this would be the most useful as we move forward.

Levi inquired that until we have ideas that gel, what can we explain to the other community members? Carl M. said that he has sifted through all the work from the committee with Jack and Renee. We have broken it up into three ideas about the Valley; how did it used to be, how are things now, and what we would like to see. Jack said that a good example of this was when we began to look at the acequias – how did they used to be, how are they now, and what would you like them to look like in the future. We need to consider what these themes really mean to the planning process. We need to use lots of pictures so that it can be visually and graphically understandable.

After the group took a break, the committee began talking about the strategic plan. Carl M. told the group that he does not want the committee to think of him as someone with a solution. He is here to learn something from the committee and to help the committee with the planning process. Donald Wilson said that for him the word strategic is very important, as it is related more to strategic timing. The Valley is at a boiling point that will consummate in March with the settlement. He said the only thing he hopes for is that we come to a solution. He added that he is a newcomer to the Valley, but he is encouraged by the community. He said he is concerned if we wait to engage ourselves during this tumultuous time. Because the community is so divided we will not get

anybody to agree with the plan. He asked if there was a way to talk about a broader topic with the planning process if we're in the middle of a crisis that is more a narrow topic. Carl M. said that crisis will define every other issue, but it will be the answers that will come with a template around the crisis. Chuck Berger said that his suggestion would be to press on with the assumption that the planning process is more important. Donald added that the committee needs to ask the community if there is anything that matters to people besides water. Jack said that the importance of being strategic is not how we move forward, but with what we move forward. He said one of the pushes last year was to get the plan together so that it would coincide with the new election of the Pueblos. We are going to miss this deadline since elections will take place at the beginning of the new year.

The committee threw out ideas of possibly creating a steering sub-committee to make things easier to manage in smaller groups. Donald proposed that the PVPC make a concerted effort to work with the other various organizations in the Valley. These groups are getting community to participate. We need to acknowledge these groups' agendas and what they are trying to accomplish. It would be a good idea to present at one of their meetings what the committee is working on. Carl M. suggested that we could provide some handouts that broaden the water issue so that they see the connection with water and planning. Jack asked the group what they thought they would propose to them and how we could engage the various organizations. Donald said that some of the members of the other organizations are suspicious so if we tell them exactly what we are doing, we can build trust. Carl M. added that we could also inform other groups how to participate if they choose to do so. Carl B. said that he thought that it would be helpful to show that there are other issues that are affecting us other than just water. David O. said that even with water issues, the lawsuit is a short time solution. The long term is a creating a community plan that will express what we can do with water for the future, among other things.

Doug said that when we present to the overall community we cannot have a static presentation. It is not only boring, but it just does not get out the message. He said that having a gallery concept that Carl M. mentioned earlier where there are lots of visual aids and techniques to have community members to express their ideas would be a good way to get people to see the big picture. He suggested even having a image of what the Valley would look like if it were built out would be a good way to show what could happen to this area without having a plan in place. Carl M. said that we would have to present and show the information in a very strategic place. Where would this be? Some members suggested the casino, the Poeh Center, the post office, and the gymnasium as possible locations.

Jack said when the committee started the planning process in earnest, this is when they started talking about the specific communities that would be involved – Jacona, Jaconita, El Rancho etc. There still needs to be work done in this regard because each community is distinct. There are mapping exercises that still need to be done. We also need to figure out where do people go to gather and where is the central place in the Valley. Carl M. said the Valley is challenged geographically because the communities and pueblos are narrowly spread out.

David O. said that the committee gave a good presentation for the Tribal Summit in Sept. of 2003 where we presented information in a concise and sensitive way. Mary Louise agreed and said that she would like to continue a process in this way.

Carl M. asked the group if they were okay with a couple of people working as a steering committee on specific issues. David O. said he thought it would be a good idea; the steering committee could work in between the bi-weekly meetings.

The committee put together a tentative timeline for 2005. David O. said that if we are going to shoot for a community-wide meeting in the spring, we need to be working pretty hard the next few months. This means we will need to work in the interim of regularly scheduled committee meetings.

Levi said that we need to work backwards from the date that we want to finish the plan, and work our way back from there. Jack agreed and said that by setting a deadline it pushes us to work towards a goal. The committee decided to work towards getting done by mid-June. Also March 1st was set to conduct the first community-wide meeting. The committee tentatively set April 1st as the date to meet with the Pueblos to share the plan with them. Jack said that revising the scenarios, developing the strategies and action plans should happen from April 1st to June 15th. Carl M. added that the scenarios are important and in his experience, he has had good luck writing scenarios with groups. He stated that the four key ingredients to a good scenario. They include: The scenario is Plausible (possibility of occurring), Emergent (emerges out of reality of what came out of the SWOTS), Divergent (considers all things that could possibly occur), and is it Relevant (unique and specific to the Valley).

The next meetings will take place on January 13th and the 27th, 2005 at the PV Administrative Building from 6:30-8:30pm.

The meeting concluded at 8:45pm.

Notes taken by R.V.