

Pojoaque Valley Planning Committee Meeting Summary
Thursday, September 15, 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 6:35pm. David Dogruel chaired the meeting and was assisted by Jack Kolkmeier and Renee Villarreal from Santa Fe County.

Announcements:

Amelia Garcia acknowledged that journalist Marissa Stone has left The New Mexican to work with public relations at the Department of Transportation. The committee agreed that she has done a good job representing us and reporting on our meetings and events. Amelia suggested that we give her something to recognize her work. Amelia offered to supply a tin frame with glass. David will draft a certificate or letter of recognition, and bring it to the next meeting for our comments. It was also suggested that we all sign a card. Diane recently took Marissa out to dinner and, since she is now with the DOT, told her about the community's need for speed humps.

Amelia also gave a short presentation about Lynn Velasco who is interested in preserving and promoting traditional farming. Lynn is trying to get funding from the legislature for farm improvement incentives, and for education about farming. She would like our group to help out with a pilot project. David felt that it was too soon for us to do a pilot project, as we need to finish our plan and get it before the Commission before the end of the year.

Jack suggested that we find a niche for where Lynn's ideas would fit. The County Extension agency could be asked to get involved in this effort. For example, we could have an agricultural fair. Paul White could also be involved in this if he is interested. A fair would be a good way to find out what activities are already going on and how different groups may be able to collaborate.

Several people wondered why Lynn is not working with other people who are interested and are currently working on promoting traditional agriculture in the area. The committee also wondered why she thought that we need to change the current location of the Valley Farmer's Market from Pueblo land to another location.

David suggested that Amelia tell Lynn about our thoughts, and invite her to come and speak to us. He also suggested that we add a short action plan for an agricultural fair, which would be held in the post-plan, implementation phase. The Valley Community Council is implemented, this group could help facilitate the fair.

Upcoming Valley Events:

Renee reminded us of two local events taking place during the coming weekend: the Pojoaque Valley Arts Fair and the Gathering for Mother Earth.

We discussed the PVPC booth at the Gathering for Mother Earth. Some committee members volunteered to work the booth and the Committee figured out a work schedule. Diane Boissevain asked for more assistance to set up and tear down for the event.

The Committee will be presenting at the next PV School Board meeting, on Wednesday, September 28th, starting at 5:00 PM. David Dogrue will give a short presentation to discuss our request to consider using the old high school building, slated for demolition, for a community space/center. He will emphasize the overlap that already exists between PVPC and the Schools – for example our plans for the multi-purpose connective trail near the school. In addition he will discuss the projects where we have worked with the school; i.e.) the logo contest involving the local youth, the use of the school's facilities for meetings, and other ideas to involve the youth. We will have about an hour of time to present and have discussions. Renee added that she will be preparing a packet to be given to the Board ahead of time that includes our vision and mission statements, the planning process timeline, and an overview of the action plans.

There are some hurdles to using the building. The school's lawyers need to determine what the legal of the building is. There would be expenses in remodeling and maintaining the building. It is possible that money the legislature allocated for demolition (\$900,000) might be reallocated for these expenses. The area in question is about 10 acres, although one corner of it will revert to the Pojoaque Pueblo. The land is privately owned, and leased to the schools on generous terms. We would need to get permission from the landowners.

Mary Lou mentioned that Maria Salazar might be powerful support for this, because she wants to collect oral histories. Having a senior center and school programs closely located would be a good way to do this. David will call her and invite her to come to the meeting.

We are all invited to come to the meeting to show our support for this idea.

We discussed ways in which the building and the land could be used. Jack was enthusiastic about creating a plaza, which could be a center of the community. Mary Lou Williams mentioned that this would be a good place for the Matachines' dances. Chuck suggested that this area could be a business incubator. Jack said that economic development could be educational. For example, students could collaborate with an architect on the design of the area. Mary Lou suggested continuing education classes, for example yoga and art classes, which could bring the community together. Diane and David suggested that the area would be a good place for Boy and Girl Scouts to meet. Others suggested that this would be a good place for after-school activities for kids.

Jack said that HUD community block grants are often used for community centers and projects like this. The County is usually able to fund a project each year, for about \$1.5 million. We should consider this as one of our funding sources.

There is also interest in using the Jacona Land Grant as a location for a community center. It might work well to have a location on the Land Grant oriented towards recreational activity. It could be part of the trail system. We need to have discussions with the Land Grant board to get a better idea of what they are considering.

Discussion of Community Forum:

Renee has collated all of the comments that were collected at the community forum. These were distributed at our meeting. We began discussing them. Most of the discussion was about the Valley Community Council. The comments from the Forum were so disparate that it would not be possible to create a consensus from them. We tried to define what the Council could and could not do. It would probably be an entity that did not make laws. However, it could have a budget.

The following were suggested as functions of the Community Council:

- Be a watchdog to make sure zoning rules are being followed.

- Communicate to the Commissioners – as an advisory committee on local issues.
- Communicate with the Pueblos regarding issues relevant to them. (For example, the County and the Pueblos are currently cooperating on animal control issues.)
- Implement the Action Plan.
- Be a Development Review Board.

The council would have been useful when the planning for 285 was being done. It could help with future projects. We discussed but did not resolve several issues. How would people be selected? One suggestion was that people volunteer or are nominated and the County Commissioners would select the members. Jack commented that it is often hard to get people to volunteer for this sort of work. Another issue is membership. Should it include Pueblo representation? Pueblo representation would be good in many ways. However, some of the functionality listed about is not relevant for the Pueblos. Also, we may want an entity that represents the non-Pueblo Pojoaque Valley, just as the Pueblos all have entities representing them. Should our County Commissioner be a member of this Council?

Future PVPC meetings:

The next meeting will be on Thursday, September 29. We need to continue discussing input from the Forum regarding the Action Plans. We also will recap on what was discussed at the PV School Board meeting taking place the previous day.

Renee said that we need to zero in on land use issues. These are always contentious. We need more input. She suggested holding more focus groups on land use issues in each community/neighborhood. A big issue is the smallest acceptable property size. We hope to do this in October.

Regarding the donation of public land – someone at the Forum asked how a family can benefit from land that is sold for open space. Mary Lou commented that we need to learn more about how Public Trusts work.

Jack remarked that family lot splits are a way to create affordable housing. He also posed a question – what is wrong with a family getting economic benefit by selling land? These are some of the questions that we need to ask from the various communities/neighborhoods in the Valley.

Notes by E.B and R.V.