



January 21, 2010

Town of Jackson and Teton County Planning Commissions
Re: Conservation Alliance comments on "What the Community Has Said About this Theme" sections
Submitted via email to Alex Norton

Dear Planning Commissioners,

On behalf of the Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance, given your discussions at the Jan. 14 hearing, I would like to clarify our concerns regarding the "What the Community Has Said About this Theme" sections in each chapter. While we appreciate the intent to provide narrative summaries within the various chapters, we have consistently raised concerns regarding the degree to which the summaries are comprehensive and objective representations of public comment. We have requested that either the sections include a comprehensive list of findings (with actual results), or that the sections are eliminated and the plan simply include the polling findings as an appendix where a comprehensive data set can speak for itself. In short, caution should be taken in citing just several polling examples in these sections given the diversity of other community input that is highly relevant to a given chapter, but that is not reflected in the abbreviated lists.

To provide specific examples, below are some excerpts of the points we raised in earlier public comment as they relate to different themes.

Theme Four - "Meet Our Community's Housing Needs"

The draft states the following: "2008 polling indicated that: a majority of the community agrees that the town and county should continue to use incentives, rather than requirements, to encourage more deed restricted workforce housing in new development." However, based on analysis of three public surveys, two of the surveys actually demonstrated the opposite result – with more people disagreeing than agreeing with the statement. Only the University of Wyoming survey shows 50.3% in agreement with the statement, with a full 40.1% opposed, which does not represent a notable majority.

Theme Three – "Uphold Jackson as 'Heart of the Region'"

The draft states the following: "Most of the community supports limiting building heights to three stories along major corridors outside of Town Square." However, other polling indicates that this is not necessarily representative of the breadth of results across surveys questions. For example, *the University of Wyoming "Key Findings" report states: "There was nearly equal agreement among residents that, "Current building heights in town today should be maintained. No change," (40%), and, "Careful redevelopment outside of the town square should be allowed, with up to 3-storey buildings," (37%).*

Also, in discussions on theme three, the Conservation Alliance provided the following examples of polling results from *The University of Wyoming, Teton County Community Survey (2008)* that could be added to allow for a broader picture of community input:

- "A far higher percentage (78%) of residents considers it a higher priority to build more deed restricted affordable housing than to allow additional commercial or resort development."
- "Both overall development in rural parts of Teton County and redevelopment in the Town of Jackson should be limited." (61%)

Theme Two – "Manage Growth Responsibly"

The Conservation Alliance raised questions as to why this section "what the community has said about this theme" included no polling coverage on questions regarding the preferred overall amount of development. **The public has expressed strong support for limiting or reducing development potential.** (See attached memo or visit www.jhalliance.org/Library/Comments/2009/CompPlan09/PublicCommentAnalysis.4-20-09.pdf for examples.) If this section remains, it should address community input on this important aspect of growth management.

Also, the narratives should not include incorrect statements, such as “the community strongly supported the value that growth in the community must be managed responsibly, and that a “no growth” strategy was not the preferred alternative.” Again, for clarification, see attached memo or visit www.jhalliance.org/Library/Comments/2009/CompPlan09/PublicCommentAnalysis.4-20-09.pdf.

Theme One – “Promote Stewardship of Wildlife and Natural Resources”

In discussions on theme one, the Conservation Alliance primarily expressed concerns about the subjectivity of the narrative portion and the degree to which polling topics were not sufficiently addressed in the new draft overall (such as the lack of a strategy to establish a funding source for conservation easements).

In conclusion, thank you for your consideration in evaluating the “What the Community Has Said About this Theme” section of the chapters. These sections should either be rewritten to more accurately reflect all the survey results, or eliminated and all the polling results included in the appendix. If the plan’s policies are written clearly enough, then they will capture and represent the community input, without having to have an additional section describing this input.

Thank you again for all your work.

Sincerely,



Kristy Bruner
Community Planning Director



Becky Tillson
Community Planning Associate