

WHITE & SMITH, LLC

MEMORANDUM

Ada County, ID



To: Mark Perfect, Planning and Zoning Administrator, Development Services
From: White & Smith, LLC
Date: April 9, 2021
Re: ZOA Listening Session 6 Notes

MEETING ATTENDEES

On April 8, 2021, the Consultant Team – White & Smith, LLC (Mark White and Rhys Wilson) joined staff to discuss issues and concerns about the Ada County Zoning Ordinance.

- Mark Perfect
- Brent Moore
- Brianna Bustos
- Talley Gaskins
- Meredith Stead (Boise Valley Economic Partnership)
- Michael Comeskey (NAPA Irrigation District)
- Todd Tucker (Boise Hunter Homes - Dry Creek Ranch)
- Chad Hamel (Grossman Company Properties – Cartwright Ranch)
- Sarah Martz (SCM Consulting)
- Ben Williams (Project Manager)
- Clark Krause (Boise Valley Economic Partnership)
- Bill Rauer (CZAC & Executive Officer for Building and Contractors Association)

NOTES BY QUESTION

Discussion

The Consultant Team noted the following discussion points.

- What is working well with the existing Zoning Ordinance?
 - Attendees provided no response to this question

- What is not working well with the existing Zoning Ordinance?
 - Attendees provided no response to this question
- Are there any specific design standards that the County needs to tune up?
 - No provision for compact parking stalls
 - Boise allows a certain % which allows more stalls in a smaller area.
 - Not sure it needs to be high in county, but could allow for that.
 - Parking code is outdated so we need to look at that
 - Shared parking provisions
- Are there any uses that are a concern, or that the Zoning Ordinance should do a better job of accommodating?
 - Different uses that affect county especially with data centers
 - We have some incentives with legislature that have extensive water and sewer demands, use lagoons, nice to know where those spots are.
 - Kuna working with county on annexing them - whether and do they fit.
 - The incentive will make ID the most competitive place to have a data center
 - Ada and surround counties will see lot more of those.
 - Nonconforming issues
 - A mechanical shop and need conditional use permit to expand + ACHD review – consider streamlining
 - Short term rentals
 - If we don't have something make sure we have something for those.
 - They can get contentious.
 - Not addressed in 2019 updates.
 - Interpreted now based on state code which classifies them as dwelling.
 - A few in rural areas.
 - Haven't had too many in the more dense neighborhoods.
 - Need work done on mitigation
 - State statute categorizes as dwellings
 - The way uses are shown
 - Currently have to go to each zone to figure out the uses allowed.
 - Boise did a giant use table, which makes it easier to find things.
 - ADUs – counted as another dwelling allowed?
 - County allows secondary dwellings, current limited to immediate family
 - Should expand that.
 - If increase density that's one way to do that.

- Can't recall historically why limited to family members
 - Did increase the size
 - Need to take a serious look at ADUs
- Are there any standards, topics or innovations missing from the current Zoning Ordinance?
 - Short plat
 - Very important
 - Doing a 3 lot subdivision now that needs both a preliminary and a final
 - Do both Preliminary & Final concurrently.
 - Cities and counties should review variances and if continually granted just allow it.
 - Ex: if always a setback variance, just make it part of the code.
 - County has done that in in the past.
 - We have some that are repeated over and over.
 - There are infrastructure needs not captured by zoning.
 - Most of the irrigation facilities are 100+ years old and predate development, when agricultural and open range.
 - Trying to look for solutions for next 100 years, and water will become more important with growth with next round of infrastructure.
 - Water issues
 - Floodplain regulations are based on decades old modelling that don't recognize current hydrology.
 - Ex: new subdivisions retain hydrology which creates opportunity to deal with floods and stormwater capture.
 - Assumptions for current model don't apply.
 - Drought tolerant landscaping
 - Boise rewrote code where if doing a PUD there are amenities they require and added drought tolerant landscaping as an amenity.
 - This creates an incentive to do that.
- Are zoning application processes meeting the needs of staff and the development community?
 - Dry Creek and maybe others – most jurisdictions have standards where when get a plat approved and go to implement you have to substantially conform to preliminary.
 - Interesting coming from city, county measures every lot to make sure it's within % on preliminary.
 - Seems crazy to put that much time and effort into something that doesn't really matter.

- If developer isn't adding lots, shouldn't matter that its within 20%.
- A lot of work and effort for both county and applicants.
- On overall basis can get the same thing with same number of lots.
- County - definition when applied to the final it has been an issue so will look at that.
- It has some generality, in residential it has a percent (10% and up).
- + we don't have a way to make streamlined changes to approved plats.
- We do have a boundary adjustment, but need change to existing plat to get to board sooner + short plats (Boise, others have that, for 4 or less lots).
- The application for master site plans
 - Requirements for natural features and other things don't apply to every project and getting a variance can take time, so provide some wiggle room.
- What should the primary outcome of the Zoning Ordinance update be?
 - Struggle to balance maintaining rural while also allowing flexibility for population growth so anything to encourage development where infrastructure is in place and preserving rural land further out would be great
 - Make the Code easier to navigate.
 - Make it easier to understand not just for development community but also citizen building a shed.
 - Easier for everyone – citizens, administrators, etc.
 - Predictability so less likely to need a variance, easier for consumers.
 - Shouldn't be hard for simple things.
 - Better streamlining
 - Manage expectations
 - A bit convoluted so streamlined to make it predictable.
 - Web interactions can be clunky – other agencies, more cumbersome in the County.
 - Long term planning, make sure we use the infrastructure where its at.
 - Will have a great piece of land but 5 new ranch homes really close and will be mad if have jobs next to them.
 - Ranchettes that keep other things from happening is not rural.

APPENDIX A: QUESTION LIST

Note: this list may be updated as the project moves forward.

1. What is working well with the existing Zoning Ordinance?
2. What is not working well with the existing Zoning Ordinance?
3. Are there any specific design standards that the County needs to tune up?
4. Are there any uses that are a concern, or that the Zoning Ordinance should do a better job of accommodating?
5. Are there any standards, topics or innovations missing from the current Zoning Ordinance?
6. Are zoning application processes meeting the needs of staff and the development community?
7. What should the primary outcome of the Zoning Ordinance update be?