*Expo Idaho Citizen’s Advisory Committee Meet & Greet Minutes*

*January 29, 2020; 5:30p.m.; Expo Idaho Western Town*

Attendees: Commissioner Kenyon; Commissioner Visser; Sheldon Barker; Allen Taggart; Bill Connors; Matthew Wordell; Matthew Wilde; Kent Rock; Ed Lodge; Marie Kellner; Andrea Fogleman; Mark Lavin; Brad Hoaglun; Kelsey Holder; Jennifer Salmonsen; Bob Batista; Scott Koberg; Lorna Jorgensen; Meg Leatherman, Brianna Bustos; Kelly Woodworth; Zach Kirk; Ellen Campfield Nelson

Commissioner Kenyon:

Commissioner Kenyon welcomed everyone and indicated that many people are wondering what can be done with the property now that the horse racing has stopped; everyone has thoughts and ideas. As a new Commission they wanted to bring people together to have a say in what happens with EXPO Idaho. The commission went through a process of identifying folks who represent a larger group and chose people that could go back out after these meetings and talk to their constituents and listen to them and come back to this table and engage in this process. Tonight is the first meet & greet; the process is going to be fairly open. We'll talk about our intended outcomes that we're looking for as a Board and answer questions. Commissioner Kenyon introduced Ada County staff. We will have subject matter experts and we can bring in stakeholders that have an interest in the property. You have an opportunity to envision this property and it's potential. We want you to start with a clean slate. Anything and everything is possible. We have one shot at developing this; don't put limitations on your vision. You're going to decide for yourselves how frequently you want to meet and the time frame. It will be citizen guided. Bob runs an enterprise fund which means it pays for itself and he gets a little nervous when we go out longer than 6 months because it impacts his ability to keep the business model running so we should be cognizant of that when looking at the time frame. We have a big job to do here. We really appreciate the public coming; you're welcome to attend any. Public engagement at large will come in phase 2, you can weigh in on our website for now. In the end, when the committee brings back several scenarios we will have a product to bring back to the public.

Meg Leatherman:

Meg indicated that this project is being led by Development services. We've had direction from the Commissioners that this will be a transparent process with a lot of public engagement. We encourage the public to go to the website that we created to input comments about what's going on.

Commissioner Kenyon:

As we get to know each other tonight we want you to be honest with us too; if you don't think you're a good fit or someone else would do a better job, let us know. We plan on leaving here tonight with a commitment to proceed or if you think there is someone else that could do a better job. The board will formally appoint folks next week sometime.

Ellen Campfield Nelson:

Ellen reminded everyone to think about their experience tonight and decide whether to be on committee and there is a sign-up sheet that will be coming around at the end of the meeting. Ellen went on to explain her background. She's interested in creating a forum where a group of folks can come together to see what this property could look like. The goal is to help us have that kind of process. The number one question she heard in the interviews was can we all come together around a vision, and that's the challenge for us. Ellen covered housekeeping and asked everyone to please sign in.

Megan Leatherman:

Meg noted that the information decided from this committee will be passed on to the county commissioners and that it will be taken to the public at large which will be a very important part of the process.

Ellen explained the packet with map and handouts that show phases 1-3. She also noted this isn't a citizens advisory committee at the moment until formal appointments. Ellen went on to state that she would be asking the group two questions and for everyone to take a couple of minutes to answer.

Question #1: What relevant and vital perspectives, expertise and experience would you bring to the Committee and the process?

Questions #2: What excites and interests you about Expo Idaho's future potential

Ed Lodge:

Ed indicated that he served on the fair board for 6 years. Over the years he's watched the fair, and the enthusiasm for the fair, grow. He goes to fair conferences and sees how important fairs are to the ag world. Fairs are an important show case to potatoes, beef and cattle. There is also Tourism and other community events such as the Ski Swap. He's excited about what the property could mean for education for students.

Kent Rock:

Kent discussed his background; 30 years as City Treasurer for the City of Boise. He grew up in farming and ranching. He has spent his life going to the fair. He's done financial analysis to see what Garden City could do with the property pertaining to tax revenue, etc. He's excited about a vision that fits here and now, and also looks down the road to the future.

Marie Kellner:

Marie works for the Idaho Conservation League. She has been on the greenbelt and the river by EXPO Idaho and believes that what she can bring to the table is more water conservation. She can bring a broader vision of how the property interacts with the River. She furthered that she loves the fair and comes all throughout the year to events. We need to balance all interests.

Matthew Wardell:

He is a photographer in town and runs a commercial studio. Matthew further explained his background. He will try to represent people in their late 20's early 30's. He's excited about how this property connects with waterways and how space can be developed to connect pre-existing hubs within Garden City and Boise. He has a vision of how Treefort has changed downtown and satellite shows in bandshells that don't have to be exclusive to downtown. He further discussed alternative modes of transportation.

Matt Wilde:

Matt Explained his background as an attorney for BSU and prior to that with Boise City Hall for 17 years. He is a 24-year resident of Garden City. He enjoys being near the river. He's excited about so much land with a transparent process. His biggest fear is that this could change the entire valley and it could be so fantastic that it hurts other parts of the valley.

Allen Taggart:

Allen explained his back ground in 4H and with the U of I extension office. They have partnered with Ada County for many years to provide research-based programs. 4H is a huge factor in youth development and the fair. He has colleagues that do FFA as well. They have the potential to disperse knowledge from college to community. Youth development continues at the forefront. There is no other place in Ada County where kids get to participate in a venue like this. He's excited about engaging more youth and family.

Sheldon Barker:

Sheldon explained his background. He's seen infrastructure projects all over the country and how important it is to get stakeholder involvement and everyone involved. He believes in being part of the community he's in. He has done volunteer work for Garden City several years ago when FEMA work was done. About 2/3 of this area is in the 100-year floodplain. He would like to see the Boise river be integrated into whatever happens here. He's also interested in swapping Lady Bird Park into the floodway.

Andrea Fogleman:

She explained her background and that she is a 41-year resident of Garden City. She feels that she brings a perspective as a resident of plantation subdivision. She sees the broken-down stables, the empty bleachers and racetrack. She can envision a vibrant gathering place for families. It needs to be active. Wouldn't it be great to have an area that contains shopping and entertainment and education?

Mark Lavin:

Mark explained his background to the group. He is the Director of City of Boise and has lived in Boise for 40 years. Excited about large track of property for place making for the city and Ada County. There is an opportunity for people to get here with all modes of transportation.

Kelsey Holder:

Explained his background as a Farmer's agent. The mayor asked him to be a part of the committee and how he can be a value. He sees the opportunity for redevelopment. He discussed the possibility of relocating the fair to south of I-84. There should be a balanced approach to working with rural communities. COMPASS numbers by 2040 expects 700,000 people plus in Ada County. He doesn't know if we're using the resources well enough. He would like to present a case for acquiring other property and looking back at some previous studies that have been done.

Brad Hoaglun:

Brad explained his background and memories of coming to western Idaho Fair. He further discussed his experience at the fair. He has been on the scholarship committee for EXPO Idaho. He is excited by the potential itself; he has no preconceived ideas. We could investigate public private partnerships.

Ellen Campfield Nelson:

Ellen indicated that we have a lot of different perspectives and she reminded the group to think about whether we have the right representation around the table.

Bill Connors:

Bill explained his background. He is the CEO of the Boise Metro Chamber of Commerce. The chamber operates the convention and visitor’s bureau. He can bring the perspective of businesses to the table. This property is the most valuable piece of real estate in Idaho right now. He lives across the river and sees so much land sitting dormmate. To activate certain parts of this property has great potential. This property is an anchor for what's happening on Chinden. The Chamber does lots of business with Expo Idaho; brings a lot of people into town for events. He's excited about trends in urban municipalities constantly trying to save money for constituents. How can you make property like this revenue producing instead of going to tax payers for everything.

Jennifer Salmonsen:

Jennifer gave her background serving on a variety of committees. She lives in Star and is connected with COMPASS. She was asked by the mayor of Star to come. She's excited to be here and getting the word out about what's going on to pull people in. She has no agenda for this property.

Ellen thanked everyone and asked them to keep in mind who would be missing from table.

Meg Leatherman:

Meg introduced herself as the Director of Development Services and thanked everyone for being here as a potential committee member. She will be going through a high-level view on existing conditions so that everyone has the same base line of knowledge moving forward. She asked everyone to keep in mind things that you may want more information on if you decide to be on the committee. We have created a map with subareas to make it easier for us to communicate. It's also good to have the same language. (See PowerPoint)

Ellen indicated that this was the highest-level overview and we're using this group (not a committee yet) as a sounding board and what are people going to have questions about. What do we need to know about this property.

Marie Kellner asked how many people are in the RV park. Bob Batista indicated that there are 200 spots that are full all the time; however, there is a 6-month maximum stay.

Allen Taggart asked what improvements are allowed to the actual path. Scott Koberg indicated that they are currently working on pathway. Without moving the pathway they can make some improvements.

Bill Connors asked if we can utilize the floodplain. Meg thinks that we can discuss in another meeting because there is so much information about the Floodway/Floodplain. Definitions would be helpful. How is the floodway different than the floodplain.

Ellen went around the room and wrote down questions that the potential committee would like to have answered.

* How many spots in RV Park?
* What improvements can be made on the greenbelt?
* What can be done in the floodway/floodplain
* What is the land trust's role (Idaho Foundation for Parks & Lands)
* History, funding of capital projects, age uses, improvements, etc.
* When/how many times has the fair moved?
* Lease obligations and Easements
* What does entertainment look like? What uses today and in the future?
* Financial Model for Enterprise Fund
* Future for the Hawks?
* Annual Event Contracts?
* New Uses (i.e. archery, urban farming, year-round uses)?
* City of Garden City?
* ACHD/ITD Chinden Access?
* Tax Payers - Where does money go?
* Statutory obligation for fair?
* Greater Boise Auditorium District Options?
* Urban Renewal District?

Ellen discussed the Citizen advisory committee structure and went over the handouts. She explained the structure and how the committee will be formed (See handouts). The Commissioners will take action in the beginning of February to appoint committee members.

Committee objectives:

* What do we know and what would we like to know?
* What could happen?
* How should we move forward, and engage the public?

Ellen indicated that hopefully this explains what you're walking into and what we hope to get out of the process. There was a brief discussion on the amount of time commitment that was expected of the committee. Meg mentioned that there were bylaws that would be adopted at the same time as appointments. It's hard to nail down a time when we're trying to keep it an open and flexible process.

Ellen asked if there were other stakeholder groups around the table. Marie stated that COMPASS could be a part. Commissioner Kenyon indicated that Clay Carley was a candidate that wasn't able to make it this time, but he was the liaison for the Development/Planning group.

Kent Rock indicated that we could invite Canyon County.

Matt Wilde indicated that he is also able to represent Garden City. His name was offered by Mayor Evans of Garden City. Matt had previously sat on the Planning & Zoning Commission for 6 years.

Other topics mentioned were historic, Recreation/tourism industry.

Ellen passed around the commitment sheet with objectives. She asked for candidates to sign up if they wish to be part of the committee and add a star next to their name if they're interested in being Chair or Vice Chair.

The next meeting will be held from 5:30pm to 7:30pm on February 26th at Western Town.

Commissioner Visser thanked the public for coming out tonight. He indicated that as an elected official he’s committed to what the residents of Ada County feel and he wants to hear from them. He furthered that tonight was his first active engagement in the process and that he wasn’t involved in the interview process. He stated that he walked outside at break to ask people what they think and he got their input. He stated that it would influence his decisions on the candidates. He heard that there were too many people from Garden City and that some people had made up their mind already. He stated that one of the candidates said they didn’t have any preconceived ideas and that’s a check point everyone should have. He quoted Victor Hugo who said there is nothing more powerful than an idea whose time has come but he said that on the flip side of that open-mindedness and objectivity foster good ideas. Pre conceived ideas foster defeat.