

MOAB AREA LAND USE

PUBLIC WORKSHOP

GRAND CENTER

April 30, 2019, 5:00-7:00pm

IN ATTENDANCE: 68 attendees signed-in. approximately 100 attended in total

WORKSHOP SUMMARY PRESENTATION

1. **Purpose of the Project**– Landmark Design outlined the project purpose and goals as follows:
 - Address the 180-day moratorium on new overnight accommodations
 - Address how overnight accommodations influence the Moab Area Affordable Housing Plan, infill housing development and redevelopment
 - Create land use policies and tools that address these and other land use challenges
2. **Project Timeline** – Ordinance recommendations are slated to be complete by the Landmark Design team in early June. Policy changes and related ordinance changes must be adopted by Moab and Grand County by the conclusion of 180-day moratorium period for each (August 2019).
3. **Summary of Public Involvement & Outreach** – Two Public Open Houses were held at the Moab City Hall on March 26th and 27th. The meetings were well-attended with 107 people signing in. In addition to these meetings, 51 written comments were received through April 2nd with several more comments received since. Additional outreach included meetings with the Grand County Planning Commission, Moab City Council, Moab high school/junior high school students, local business owners, non-motorized trail users and federal land management agencies.
4. **Economic Analysis** – Preliminary results of an economic analysis was presented by Lewis, Young, Robertson & Burningham (LYRB).
5. **Public Workshop Introduction** – An overview of draft Guiding Principles for the project, an updated Regulatory Toolbox and five Planning Options were briefly presented. Attendees were then broken into six groups of 8-10 people to discuss each scenario in more detail. Summaries and detailed notes from each group follow.

SUMMARY OF INPUT BY WORKSHOP GROUPS

Once the presentation was complete, attendees were divided into six small groups ranging from 12 -15 people. The purpose was to review the five options in order to settle on a preferred direction. As part of this process the groups were also asked to review the Guiding Principles in order to determine whether or not they were aligned with the five options were aligned. The following is a summary of the results for each group.

GROUP 1

- Eliminated Options #1 and #5, no consensus decision on the other options

- The group was split on the amount of regulation that was acceptable. Most favored strict performance standards and context-sensitive form-based codes while a minority wanted to reduce the regulatory burden
- There was broad consensus on:
 - Mixed-use development
 - The need for more neighborhood commercial
 - Community nodes as a land use model
 - Walkability, particularly downtown, in neighborhoods and around community nodes
 - Human scale development

GROUP 2

- Eliminated Option #1
- Would support more lodging if there are greater limitations on scale, numbers of units and performance requirements; no consensus where lodging should be located.
- Need more specificity
- Option #5 – The “No Growth” title was confusing, as it was only meant to refer to overnight accommodations. This needs to be clarified so it is clear that the option would accommodate other types of commercial growth and development
- Support for form-based codes

GROUP 3

- Eliminated Options #1 and #2
- Option #3 – Okay with more restrictions on number of overnight accommodations; some support for Option #4
- Employee housing—needs to mandate adequate parking conditions, upkeep and livable conditions
- Water requirements/restrictions and knowing how much water is available and used by overnight accommodations is extremely important
- Height and other form-based restrictions should be part of the solution
- Desire incentives for local, small businesses and higher impact fees to developers
- Feel like Option #5 opens up too much attention from the state and litigation

GROUP 4

- Eliminated Option #1
- Mostly support Option #4; some support for Option #3
- Option #5 – concerned that state will step in if this is enacted, or that the demand will shift to San Juan County instead, resulting in no improvement related to congestion, etc.
- No development on Kane Creek
- Consideration of water needs is important/essential
- Broad support for mixed-use, especially in southern portions of Highway 191
- Scale of all commercial uses should be small – no big box development
- Increase environmental and aesthetic standards
- Mixed feelings about campgrounds/RV—feel like they are less invasive, but should still consider their impact to views, etc.

GROUP 5

- Eliminated Options #1 and #2
- Would like to pull form-based code from Option #3 into Option #4
- Concerned about the over-concentration of overnight accommodations in the northern section of Highway 191 as indicated in Option #4
- Encourage small-scale bed and breakfasts and locally-owned hotel operations
- Affordable housing—don't want the need to provide affordable housing to get lost in this process

GROUP 6

- Eliminated Option #1
- Majority supported Option #5, while ensuring that other commercial growth still occurs in the affect areas; want to swing the pendulum back the other way and make corrections in the future to balance, if needed
- Option #4—like limits, but not that it's concentrated
- Want more investment in downtown
- Individual overnight accommodation types should be addressed separately
- The top guiding principles are numbers 1, 2, 6, 8 – they are all focused on putting the community first

VERBATIM WORKSHOP GROUP NOTES

GROUP 1

- Nightly rentals are basically weekend rentals, monthly rentals are essentially yearly rentals; Missing product is 1-3 months rentals (seasonal, etc.)
- For the last 35 years, Moab has been pushed toward tourism because mineral exploration went away
- Employee housing doesn't work in the real world, hard logistically and offers tenants little freedom (e.g. the company town)
- Need more information on the economic analysis
- Moab lacks 1000+ affordable housing units, this doesn't address that need directly
- Don't think we can stay at the status quo
- Need measured and controlled growth - entrepreneurial person can't move here and we need to keep the vacancy rates low
- Need spaces reserved for other types of businesses
- Growth needs to be controlled, too much focus on nightly rentals being the source of the problem when it's just a small part. What's the real problem to address to solve the issue?
- Reason for problems is extreme growth in popularity of outdoor activities that weren't always popular (mountain biking, ATVs, etc.)

- Participant likes Option #2 if downtown is developed smartly – Options #3 through #5 give existing hotels too much of an advantage
- Incentivize mixed use, enforce the existing rules (especially illegal overnight rentals) by increasing fines for violations, etc.
- Participant likes Option #2 with mixed use/form-based code requirement
- No one wanted Option #1
- Option #2 has strong support from real estate professionals
- Moab’s historic western downtown will be destroyed with form-based codes to keep downtown/Main Street - character, historical preservation, walkable, human scale
- As it exists, we have a scrape-and-rebuild town so it is possible to see downtown become unfriendly and unwalkable
- Pedestrian safety an issue
- Concerned with cookie-cutter form-based codes that could make things more bland
 - Form-based codes can be done with much more nuance, but they require lots of work and investing the appropriate amount of money to produce a quality code
- One participant felt that Moab doesn’t have a “cute” downtown with interesting buildings – not like little Colorado towns, for example
- Zoning on the north end of town is suburban in nature – it’s unwalkable
- Downtown area should stay human scale and the form-based code should extend to north of town to make that area appropriately scaled as well
- Some feared becoming like Sedona with a cute downtown and horrific traffic and long slowdowns; Need a by-pass road to accomplish this
- Need mixed use in north corridor and Spanish Valley
- Concern about over-regulation and unreasonably telling people what they can do with their land. Regulations cost money that is ultimately passed on to the person buying the house.
 - Example: Over \$80,000 and 5 engineers/architects needed to address new regulations and the buildings still aren’t ready to be built. 4 buildings with identical floor plans were built previously for \$30,000 less. The difference is passed on to the consumer. In the end, city and county regulations cost the consumer money.
- Discussion about development on the north vs. the south of downtown.
 - Competition between commercial uses is limiting development in San Juan County which is a good thing at this point
 - There are serious flaws with all hotels being located north of downtown with retail to the south. It is better to keep everything mixed use along the entire Highway 191 corridor.
- Options #3 and #4 make it really difficult for any downtown property owners
- Would like to see more continuity between Moab and Grand County
- Would like frontage roads to access businesses in Spanish Valley (similar to the plan adopted by San Juan County).
- Like the community nodes in Options #4 and #5.
- Lots of consensus on encouraging mixed use
- Overnight accommodations have already spread south to Spanish Valley
- There are certain times when the area experiences traffic extremes – Friday nights and Sundays

- How many more tourists can we accommodate without seeing drastic losses to quality of life?
- Discussion of Option #4:
 - We already regulate where overnight rentals can happen in residential zones, but we don't exclude lodging from commercial zones. Option #4 would allow commercial zones to grow into themselves without competition from hotels
 - What businesses other than hotels/motels would locate in commercial zones in Spanish Valley if Option #4 were adopted? Is it still too expensive even then?
 - To have more economic diversity, we need more commercial zoning especially neighborhood commercial in key areas adjacent to residential zones
- One participant expressed the desire for local government to look at ways to simplify zoning and codes to make it easier to develop housing and other needed products
- Many felt Moab needs more density; Strong support for the county's overlay related to this
- South corridor is already commercial 600'+ from the highway (KOA and rentals in Rim Village)
- Already 1,200 additional overnight accommodation units have been approved, but they haven't been built yet
- Many felt there should be size limitations and mixed use requirements on hotels above a certain size. Some expressed concern that the market may not be able to handle mixed use everywhere and such requirements would be overly burdensome
- Many agreed that less overnight accommodation development would force other commercial uses as the next "highest and best use"
- Everyone agreed: development should be properly scaled, contain a mix of uses and there is a immediate need for more neighborhood commercial

GROUP 2

- Option #5 should be called "No Increased Overnight Rentals"
- Can growth be determined on a percentage basis? Percentage occupants, square footage, number of buildings would determine how much is allowed
- When discussing no additional overnight accommodations, there was concern about blending growth with existing neighborhoods; Want neighborhood preservation measures
- Participant asked what defines growth. Overnight rentals? Commercial? Housing?
- One participant was okay with neighborhood-scale commercial
- Some were okay with more hotels if assurances are made for community amenities (e.g. open space preservation)
- Participant stated that stress is coming from traffic, not hotels (Center Street and 100 South). No problem with having a business area as it exists currently – it's the traffic volume and speed.
- Overnight rentals should have transportation and other mitigating factor requirements. If these exist, participant is okay with overnight rentals
- Commercial property owners already own land north of town
 - "This was never a 'livable' community"
 - Tourists could park on the edges and be shuttled into town
- Participant stated that there is no residential north of town already – tourists are coming in from the north from the National Parks so it should be allowed if taxes and impact fees are paid

- Participant wants small scale overnight accommodation developments (10-20 units) in the future
 - Purchasing commercial land is speculative and Moab shouldn't be responsible for owners being able to use their land for whatever purpose they want
- Young people could afford to live here if they could operate limited overnight rentals to create income
 - Another participant agreed this could create affordable options
- Gradations of growth and no growth
 - All commercial development is competing with lodging development because of profitability. How do we allow this to happen?
- Commercial, existing land use could be used/allowed to build residential projects
- Majority of group agreed to eliminate Option #1, but there was one who felt the status quo was the fairest to property owners
- Participant asked if hotels are currently filling up. One data point says rentals decreased from 2017 to 2018. Hotel occupancy is anecdotally down.
- Discussion about Option #2
 - Is it legal to remove right to develop overnight rentals? We can make certain requirements to limit overnight accommodations with very restrictive regulations
- What do people like on the maps?
 - We expect more of future development
- Employees of hotels need places to live; This is already required of new hotels
- There was a consensus that more residential and neighborhood growth is desirable

GROUP 3

- AirBnbs should be included as bed and breakfasts
- Questions about Cisco and Elgin – would like planning efforts there as well
- Concern that the process is too contentious and that the State of Utah will try to intervene
- #1 concern is water
 - Nearing or at capacity
 - Need estimation of accommodations or resources
 - Need to know environmental impact before choosing overlay
 - Research what hotels, etc. currently use
 - Grey water usage
 - Would like to see estimate for water usage each option
- Parking is a big issue for residents in existing neighborhoods
 - Requirements in overlay zones need to include off-street parking and upkeep of property
- There need to be requirements or incentives for use of solar
- Landscaping requirement need to include the use of grey water and native plants
- Option #2 is already out of scale and issues with “stay and live” gives it a lower rating
- Option #3 should include a form-based code

- Discussion ended discussing an “Option #3.5”, depending on restrictions and the facts those restrictions are based on (need more facts/data to make a decision)

GROUP 4

- Option #1 is out
- No franchise hotels
- Love the idea of “no more growth” but concerns about going to San Juan County and the resulting traffic; Transit-hubs could help alleviate some of this
- North of downtown – mixed use and transition into town
 - Environmental concerns about development along wetlands; Would protect existing neighborhoods all the way down
 - What would be the State’s reaction to no longer allowing overnight accommodations?
 - Need corridor and landscaping buffer standards
 - Preserve aesthetics and views
 - “Put it all underground”
 - Adobe construction, green roofs, porous pavement, grey water recycling, etc.
- Not a huge issue with RVs – up the creek and older established ones are decent
- Support for parking lots and other places to park and store trailers, etc.
- Encourage mixed use, but concerned about state involvement
- No more hotels in Colorado River overlay area, but RVs okay?
- “Match scale of development” sounds scary
- Mixed use, ratio of mixed use to overnight rentals
- No big box stores
- Desire for small – limit size for all commercial to support local businesses
- Ban franchises
- Group didn’t feel that discussing the Guiding Principles was as important as discussing the various planning options laid out
- Mandatory STR and LTR, mixed use – don’t like overnight rentals embedded in residential neighborhoods, however.
- Some desire for no campgrounds north of town
- Key points:
 - Focusing development on the north side
 - Mixed use – especially in southern portion of 191
 - Other standards – aesthetic, size/scale and environmental
 - No more overnight accommodations downtown
 - North of town, camping over hotels?
 - Serious restrictions
 - Majority of group favored Option #4 with some prefers Options #2 and #3
 - Limit development along Kane Creek
 - Support for “no growth” but concerns about overflow into San Juan County and/or the state intervening
 - Eliminated Option #1

GROUP 5

- No more downtown
- Smaller, mixed use stuff
 - Match the scale of the neighborhood
 - Provide amenities to the neighborhood
- It really doesn't feel like a community – it's overrun
- No new hotels on northern section of Highway 191, open to it with an overlay
- If we stopped advertising, we wouldn't need hotels
- "I'd rather pay property taxes than deal with tourists"
 - We're paying for it one way or another
- If we don't allow it at all, people with drives from San Juan County to Arches
- "Do any of these suggest demolishing the river bridge?"
- In favor of townhouses for residents.
- Hate fear-based planning, staking counties against each other for Walmart, hotels, etc.
- Pro form-based code, but want more restriction than Option #2
- One participant doesn't like city's current approach to AirBnbs
- "If we still allow some growth, we can control it" vs. it occurring in San Juan County
- Don't agree with concentrating everything north of town - need to disperse more
- "Short-term rental allowance in residences is why we have our housing problem"
- All were pro-mandatory mixed use and performance standards.
- We're never going to have less than a million visitors, need to plan to address this
- Controlled growth, but more than just North Highway 191 – bad for safety, walkability, all along Highway 191
- Need long-term RV parks
- We want more dispersed than Option #4, but smaller, more focused areas than Option #3
- For form-based codes
- If we do Option #5, we want to try to use existing more efficiently
- "We can't be held hostage to the tourists"
- "People say tourists are paying their way, but they're not"
- Some growth, reluctantly, should be allowed
- Pro small bed and breakfasts
- More community-centric overnight accommodations
 - Local-owned hotels, rather corporate chains – discourage large scale
- Summary:
 - Heavy restrictions – form-based code, mixed use
 - Concern about over-concentration on North Highway 191 with Option #4
 - Encourage small-scale bed and breakfasts and locally-owned hotel operations
 - Struck Options #1 and #2, working between Options #3, #4 and #5

GROUP 6

- No overnight accommodations downtown? But that creates transportation problems – keep shops downtown, add transportation options or mixed use
- Community node – some businesses now, could be more housing too; Group likes this approach
- Is “no growth” legal? Yes, can downzone a parcel.
- Concerns about water – carrying capacity means there are more limits than just space
- Sunset method for a period of “no” growth?
- Not fair to lump all overnight accommodations with hotels/millionaires
- Are hotels even at capacity?
- RV pads are maxed out, need more! Will drive costs up on the north end
- No hotels here, but campgrounds are okay in some areas; Same with bed and breakfast establishments
- Separate high-density accommodations from low density ones – split the small from the large
- RV parks – where people are living right now; Locals can’t expand businesses due to shortage of housing
- Gridlock already with 1,100 more in the pipeline
- Use-by-right vs. overlay? You can *apply* to build a hotel – more legislative
- Why only Moab Valley? Most urgent issue and there are other restrictions for the rest of the county like water/sewer/utilities
- We should not have these developments inadvertently
- 0 voted for Option #1
- 2 voted for Option #2
- 1 voted for Option #3
- 4 voted for Option #4 – hotels should be more diverse and the areas should be smaller and more of them, mixed use on the bottom floor
- 11 voted for Option #5
- Don’t like the wording of “No Growth”, prefer something like “No New Overnight Accommodations”
- Limit places for hotels, but spread those places out to the south too – small areas though