

**Lower Valley Advisory Group
(LVAG)
Planning Meeting**

**April 6, 2008 5:00 – 8:00 pm
Methow Cafe**

Present: Gloria Royse, Keith and Kevin Stennes, Betty Hagenbuch, Ken Orford, Karen Luft

Absent: Arlan Ruf, Kathie Windle, Alex Kerr, Bill Tackman, Isabelle Spohn, Bev Zwar, Al Hymer

Agenda

I. Housekeeping

A. Announcements:

Perry Huston/Development Agreements in Twisp Saturday March 22 at the Local was well-attended; attendees also report that the subsequent Planning Commission meeting on March 24 was “very interesting”.

Water Rights Workshop April 14, Flyer at Methow, Pateros Post offices

The Methow Conservancy has requested a Letter of Support from LVAG for the Farmland Conservation program. A copy of a potential letter will be available at our next meeting for review. The letter would assist the effort to obtain a conservation easement for the Stennes’.

B. BOCC Letter/Approach

Beverly and Betty agreed to take the lead on getting on the BOCC agenda and submitting the letter, as signed by LVAG. Planning Director Perry Huston reports that he introduced the letter and the concept at a recent BOCC meeting, and received “guarded interest”.

The next step is to involve the Dept. of Public Works into the discussion and gain their support for the initiative, which seems to have county wide support. Perry agreed to remain in contact with Beverly and/or Betty.

C. Last Meeting Notes

Reviewed and Approved

II. Schedule Adjustments

A. Community Meeting

The Community Meeting has been scheduled for May 1, and press releases will be arranged as well as pizza-ordering and reservation of the Community Center. We will use our next meeting to plan for the Community Meeting.

B. Other Adjustments

Due to the additional discussions the group has had about density and not enough attendance at this meeting, our ambitious schedule has fallen behind. Some of the areas where LVAG feedback is desired will therefore be handled via email (Goals and Policies), and some feedback may be left for the review phase. We will plan to prioritize our work to ensure that the most critical feedback is submitted after we conclude our May 15 meeting.

III. What will LVAG Feedback to County Look Like?

A list of the contents of the LVAG feedback “packet” was presented (and will be shared again at the next meeting for those unable to attend this one). Following the Community Meeting on May 1, Lorah will compile ALL of the information and feedback collected to date into a draft packet for your review, editing, and approval on May 15. The LVAG feedback will be incorporated into the Draft Comprehensive Plan, scheduled to be unveiled on June 11. From July to September, we will have the opportunity to review and correct the draft.

V. Land Use Map Updates with Kurt Danison

Kurt presented the latest draft of a Land Use Map showing potential density designations in the planning area and focusing on the potential for different designation in the “Uplands” area. We also reviewed Kurt’s analysis of the impact on the number of lots that 20, 40, and 60 acre minimum lot sizes in the uplands would have.

This led to a long discussion about the concerns that some group members share about community perception of our work: some are concerned that there is an “integrity issue” about LVAG members who are subdividing now while recommending future restrictions for others. There is the perception that community members might be offended; there is also the realization that this group’s recommendations will not likely take the form of one strong proposal but a range of options that were considered. The community and the political process will have to weigh in and influence the outcome before the process and the Plan are complete, which should take some of the pressure off LVAG members.

Specific Feedback from tonight’s meeting about Density (uplands and valley floor):

- “Big pieces of brown, weedy land” are possible and likely at any density unless other measures are in place to provide for irrigation and/or agriculture. How do we find tools and incentives to keep the landscape either native or green/in production?
- The quality of future developments will likely be more important to the community than the underlying density, so we should spend more time discussing what folks DO and DON’T want to see, now that we’ve outlined a range of potential underlying densities. For example, the “brown weedy lands” question can in part be helped by adding requirements for subdivisions and/or planned developments/cluster developments.
- Some Development standards the group wants to see: Setbacks from the river (keep at 200 feet, regardless of outcome of Shorelines); Setbacks from road in visually sensitive areas; maintenance requirements for developments that establishes a plan for retaining agriculture OR maintaining native vegetation and green space and preventing weeds.
- Require or set a bonus for including “affordable housing” lots (subsequent research indicates Chelan county may be doing something like this that involves an Affordable Housing Land Trust)

- Require or set a bonus for Cluster developments that incorporate conservation of working agricultural lands and provisions to keep the lands in production.
- Clearing and Grading or comparable ordinance is one of the most important steps that can be taken to mitigate the community's concerns about unrestricted road development, and county's concerns about developers waiting until after infrastructure is in place before applying for a project.
- Recommended language: "No Action will take place (ie road-building, clearing or platting a subdivision) until proven legal water is available for the project"

Discussion continued around mapping and potential density designations for different areas. Kurt agreed to work up an "Option 3" map showing a range of densities as discussed for different areas. He will also complete analysis of this option as he has with other potential density designations, and present them at the April 27 meeting. We discussed using the "sticky dot" exercise to allow community members at the Community Meeting to choose their preferred map.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:19pm