

**Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan**  
**Focus Groups**  
September 14, 2011

**Character Zones**

- Show map of proposed zones and property lines
  - Address conflicting property lines & zone lines
- What is allowed within the setback?
  - No parking = a ‘taking’?
- Is the Build-to-Zone measured from setback or property line?
- Standards need more flexibility
  - Seem too cookie cutter
  - Need more slack
- Design charrette would be helpful to test regulations
  - Too many designers involved already; just ask “doers”
- Development meeting a good idea
  - Invite national developers (e.g. Forest-Covington)
  - Opportunity to start selling ideas to the market
  - Add an active citizen on Panel Discussion in November
- How can the Plan protect property owners with Town Center zoning if market bleeds out to RC, MX, etc.?
  - Is the commercial market open too wide in the MX zone?
- How do businesses in Town Center survive next to Regional Center, larger-scale businesses?
  - Staples in Nob Hill
  - Bookworks in strip mall (local business)
- Phasing development will be important
  - TC/RC/NC – lower buildings and lesser density for a while
- Ground floor finish level requirement difficult with rock & topographic changes
  - Blasting of subsequent development will crack buildings
  - Hard to coordinate with adjacent developments if go with ADA compliance only

**Block Sizes**

- Define block sizes
- Block sizes don’t seem to allow for imaginative layouts – like center courtyard in the middle of the block
- Frontage and block size seem incompatible
- Performing arts center, etc. will be too big for these blocks
- Get rid of block sizes – network is already small enough
- Block size one of most important regulations for pedestrian friendliness
  - Block size criteria a key part of Town Center
  - No pedestrian feel with long blocks
- Is it realistic to recreate “live, work, shop” in one block?
- Sketch out blocks – see if math works with requirements

### **Structure/building Heights**

- Bonus criteria – good idea, but need to test
- Height limit/bonus system a problem
  - Users from out of state will walk away (too complicated, too unpredictable)
  - New uses require around 38 feet
- Too much 26 feet
- With 26 feet everywhere, will we get same roofline throughout?
- Users want “flex areas” with clear height of 28-30 feet (total height around 40 feet)
  - Big boxes typically 32 feet
  - Engineering/design users
- Town Center height should match what can accommodate users (market reality)
- Town Center structure height should be at least 36’
  - Couldn’t build the live/work units like downtown without height bonuses
- Height should be “height of structure”
- Are rights from bonuses transferable to other sites?
  - Want to see bonus height transfer across properties, saleable, and lifetime
- Buffer zones are enough to protect this special area
- Work with topography
  - TC is in a lower area, so higher heights may be okay
  - Model the heights/topography and show pictures of possible development heights
  - Would rather see development on topography vs. cutting into hills to build

### **Open Space/Trails/Natural & Cultural Resources**

- Open Space Impact Fee better than Bonus Point System (known dollar value vs. uncertain outcome & cost)
- Consider inventory of cultural resources in Town Center
  - Agricultural field features to be preserved as part of the bonus system
- Integrate Plan with cultural landscape
  - Overlay
  - Provide direction to landowners – priorities and choices
  - Plaza proposal as model
- Show Open Space map, Monument planned trails, and preferred trail corridors within Heights
  - Allows property owners to consider how to integrate with Monument trails, access, and parking
  - Do meeting focused on OS/Parks
- Pay attention to Piedras Marcadas
  - Angled toward southwest to tie to other corridors
  - Cultural history
  - Topography
- OS should purchase playa area

- Would like to see commitment from National Park Service to link Piedras Marcadas with their trail system & Jill Matricia parking area
- Entitlements are a big gift from the City to property owners
  - In return, there should be a cost or impact fee
  - City should also benefit on behalf of the community
- Will open space features be identified, prioritized?

### **Circulation/Access**

- How does Volcano Heights integrate with ABQ area (people on Paseo)?
  - Access will drive the plan
  - Cottonwood as anti-model
  - “Bottleneck Mesa”
  - Traffic pattern needs to be amenable to proposed land use
- Address circulation around area north of Plan boundary (school complex)
  - Where will kids cross?
  - East-west pedestrian crossing on boundary (north and south)
  - Integrate Plan with established and developed areas on north and south (and east/west)
- Access points will drive the plan for land use
- Have MRCOG at the public meeting to present the draft.
  - Regional traffic movement important
  - Need to hear from MRCOG that this works and has support
- DMD excited to have a destination connected to transit
- DMD & MRCOG excited to be coordinating land use and transportation
- Traffic model needed
  - Do with high numbers
  - Do before EPC hearing process
  - Do the planning effort right the first time
  - Need local perspective, consultants with local knowledge

### **Street Cross Sections**

- Street canyons with buildings pushed to streets?
  - What would work for residential uses? Wider corridors?
  - In exchange for height?
- Mistake to allow first-in development to determine A or B Street
  - Plan should dictate (benefits whole area)
  - Provides predictability
  - Criteria based on water, drainage, etc. (staff decides)
- Streets should be wider
  - BRT route – head-in parking?
  - Bike trails along South (teacher / student can walk to school)
- Need clear responsibilities for maintaining landscaping & street trees
- Figure out left-hand turn lanes in Town Center
  - Need 3 turn lanes

- Roads seem dominated by bikes – would prefer to see two driving lanes (at least a center turn lane)
- With exclusively single-lane roads, accidents will cause gridlock

### **Building Design Standards**

- Building design
  - Solar panels – meet optimum solar angle
  - Cesar Pelli building needs to be allowable
  - Architectural innovation allowable pending Review Team approval
- 30-foot façade articulation requirement boring
  - Can't all be boxes
  - Circular façade should be okay
- Architectural style should be required to be consistent on adjacent projects

### **Other**

- Jobs/salaries need to be high enough to support housing costs