

Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

Notes July 12, 2023 Meeting

Committee Members in Attendance:

Robert Chavez

Ray Cvetic

Hank Kelly

George Radnovich, Trustee

Gilbert Benavides, Trustee

Maida Rubin, P&Z Director

Ann Simon, Village Administrator

Other Attendees:

Sandra Gaiser, Consultant, by phone

JT Michelson, P&Z Commission Chair

Tim McDonough

Kay Beason

Notes:

- Discussion of mandatory regulations.
 - Group members voiced leaning towards 30% conservation set-aside; a proposal is on the table for no bonus at 30% but that a density bonus might kick in if a developer conserved 40% or 50%.
 - The group discussed why, at 30%, would this happen without a bonus? And is mandating this a good use of the Village police power? We need a lot more vetting of this issue than the current allotted timeframe. Resident involvement is critical. A mandatory requirement will most likely be litigated.
 - The group discussed an idea that conservation be permissive with a bonus in C-1, R-2, and R-3 Zones. The 80 foot and 280 foot setbacks within the Rio Grande Character Areas would remain in place.
 - Staff offered that a non-mandatory conservation ordinance allows further tests of the ordinance and is a gentler option. The Zoning Code already contemplates open space—60% permeable surface requirements, setbacks, etc.
 - The public has already expressed a lack of fairness in only implementing the ordinance in specific character areas.
- Discussion of High Desert development and how prohibiting walls at the lot lines created open space.
 - Trustee Radnovich shared the High Desert goals to maintain arroyo and land in natural state, to maintain historic flows and ecosystem health. This meant homes had to have natural areas around them, a transition area between home and property line, and no walls or fences at the property line. Homes are allowed a “private area” for landscaping, walls, etc. but include height restrictions.

- If applied to Los Ranchos, the natural areas would look like the bosque. Proposal that this approach could be the answer to the desired conservation open space.
- Discussion ensued about setbacks prohibiting farming—a valuable use of open space, and the need for fencing as a property rights issue.
- Discussion about who enforces/manages the shared open space—an HOA or the Village? Observation made that due to the differences in Los Ranchos, a maintenance plan that includes identifying water availability and land upkeep would be necessary.
- Question arose that this might mean status quo development—1 house/acre without walls, like Prado and Caballero.
- Discussion ensued about pursuing this approach in conjunction with changes to the Conservation Pilot Ordinance or as a separate step?
- Group acknowledged that there are two Villages, one on 4th Street and one west of 4th.
- General discussion
 - Comments made about focusing on cluster housing not just acreage.
 - Few large lots left, mostly just Tripa lots.
 - Many people want small lots with walking paths and other amenities.

Next Meeting: **Friday July 21st at 9:00-10:30 a.m.**

Village Hall, 6718 Rio Grande Blvd., NW, Los Ranchos, NM 87107