

March 17, 2008 Community Event: Basic Script for Steering Committee Members

Recommended Actions to Preserve Agriculture

1. Adopt a land use and zoning map designating a core growth area designed to direct growth into and adjacent to existing town. Proposed growth area comprised of one mile buffer around existing center of town. Zoning standards will assign density within the core. **(Responsibility: Glen and Robin)**

This recommendation reflects the primary recommendation of the committee: we know that the Amsterdam/Churchill area is going to grow; this action item recommends that new growth in the Churchill area should primarily be directed into and around the existing town. Within this core, zoning standards will be adopted assigning density within the core. The core is shown on the map on the screen and on everyone's table. Adoption of the land use and zoning map will require action from the County Commission.

Focusing growth into the community core minimizes potential conflicts that could occur if residential growth were to happen in the agricultural outlying areas of the community.

2. Adopt zoning standards protecting canals and ditches. **(Responsibility: Walt)**

Most of these standards are being put into our subdivision regulations. When that happens, all new subdivisions will have to comply. Placing them in zoning regulations ensures that any construction on vacant lots will also have to comply (which is a significant benefit to the canal companies). That said, the standards generally are:

- a. Require new subdivision or commercial construction next to an existing irrigation ditch to contact the ditch/canal company prior to approval;*
 - b. Acknowledgement that the irrigation company has been contacted;*
 - c. Require all irrigation systems to shown on the plat or site plan;*
 - d. Prohibit channeling of stormwater or snowmelt runoff into an irrigation system without the express consent of the canal company;*
 - e. Require a setback from the centerline of any irrigation system for new construction. This setback would be the baseline – it could increase or decrease given the situation and pending written approval by the canal company.*
 - f. Acknowledgement by the canal company before any canal/ditch is altered by development;*
3. Adopt zoning standards requiring buffer widths between new development and existing agricultural operations. **(Responsibility: Jason)**

This would require a setback – say 50 or 100 feet – between the lots in a new subdivision and an existing agricultural operation. The point of this would be avoid nuisance complaints, problems with dogs getting loose, conflicts between late-night haying or spraying, etc. Everyone needs to understand that this is a zoning standard!

4. Continue providing opportunities for landowners to learn about the open lands board and program. **(Responsibility: Walt)**

The Open Lands Program is a voluntary, County-initiated program that purchases conservation easements on agricultural land. The Open Lands Program has been around since 2001, and several Churchill residents have volunteered for the board. There have been two separate bonds passed by the citizens of Gallatin County (\$10 million each time); this recommendation shows commitment on the part of Gallatin County and the residents of Churchill to continue providing opportunities for members of the Churchill agricultural community to learn about and use the program.

5. Implement zoning standards requiring new development outside of the core to cluster development in an open space development pattern. **(Responsibility: Walt)**

This recommendation states that OUTSIDE of the core (discussed earlier by Glen and Robin), new development will be required to cluster in a historical development pattern. This will require new subdivision to be located on small lots adjacent to public roads, with substantial amounts of open space set aside for continued agriculture and open space. This serves to limit potential conflicts between existing agricultural operations and large-lot residential development. It also serves to conserve as much land as possible in farm ground, while also providing landowners with options for limited development if necessary.

Recommended Actions to Protect Community Values

1. Adopt zoning standards to prohibit bars, casinos and sexually-oriented businesses **(Responsibility: Leroy)**

One of the primary values we heard about in both community events was the small-town and Christian values. In order to preserve those values, this policy recommends that a zoning standard be adopted prohibiting bars, casinos, and sexually-oriented businesses.

Recommended Actions to Provide Better Infrastructure

1. Require sidewalks, curb and gutter, and streetlights in all new major developments within the core area. **(Responsibility: Reese)**

This recommended action would require new development, where the majority of the lots are less than 1 acre in size, to build curb, gutter, sidewalks, and streetlights. As more and more residents move to the area, the committee wants to ensure that streets and neighborhoods remain safe for pedestrians. This would require the County to adopt these changes into its subdivision regulations.

2. Commit to exploring ways to provide a new sidewalk along Churchill Road. **(Responsibility: Reese)**

With two churches and two schools both located along major roads, the committee recommends that the community explore ways to provide a new sidewalk along Churchill Road. The committee would also like to explore ways to provide a pedestrian connection to Amsterdam School along Camp Creek Road. This is going to take a commitment on the part of the community, especially landowners who live along these roads. Because both roads are mostly developed, this action item will require volunteer commitment on the part of the community, as well as cooperation with Montana Department of Transportation and the Gallatin County Road Department.

3. Identify needs within the core growth area **(Responsibility: Warren)**
 - a. Parks and Trails
 - b. Transportation
 - c. Community Water/Sewer
 - d. Emergency Services

The topic we're going to focus on is parks and trails. As discussed the other night, the committee identified three priorities to focus on:

- *Connect Godfrey Canyon Estates to the rest of the community to the north;*
- *Investigate the idea of "rails to trails" and the conversion of the railroad along Camp Creek Road to a pedestrian trail;*
- *Ball fields. While Manhattan Christian and Amsterdam School currently provide some access to ball fields, committee members felt that the community would benefit by providing more. An obvious area to provide community ball fields would be immediately adjacent to the Manhattan Christian School.*