

# Ouray County Study Group

## Minutes

August 20, 2008

4:00PM

Land Use Office

Those present included:

Dr. Theobald, Sara Coulter, Karen Risch, Lynn Padget, Ken Lipton, Heidi Albritton, John Clark, Ted Collin and Craig Fetterolf weren't able to attend

### 1. Minutes of August 6, 2008

The minutes were unanimously approved.

### 2. Dr. Theobald Presentation

Dr. Theobald gave the group a general review of his study, and the changes that the group had requested. He stated that he was working with Lynn to come up with some different ways of portraying the mining claims, those will not change the underlying assumptions. He went directly to the results table on page 15, and explained that there were numbers that had changed based on new information. That new info included new conservation easements and other new data. The numbers are floating somewhat, but the relative values have remained the same. The take home message is the same. The original report was dated 1-1/2 years ago, and there have been some changes in perspective on items such as clustering. Dr. Theobald indicated that the draft dated 8.19 should be more inclusive of these changes.

He then went to the maps and data sets to demonstrate how he had put them together, and what they graphically represent. He discussed the concept of the "cluster preference area", this being an area that would indicate areas that would be preferred to be utilized for development on any given area. This is a new direction, and he went this way in attempt to address the group's concerns about the graphic representation of 'clustering' parcels. He had made some changes to the mapping to show the 5-acre building envelopes in a way that was to scale, rather than the previous 'blobs'. The group felt this was a much more helpful method to use, and allowed for a better understanding of the scenarios.

One caveat that Dr. Theobald discussed was that the mapping was useful on a County-wide level, not at a micro-level. This means that it should not be used to look specifically at individual parcels for a specific building envelope or location. It is a planning tool, not a model to be used for specific development. There is a possibility of using the 'cluster preference' area as an actual zoning area. Theobald stressed that if the County were to go in this direction, it would be necessary to go back and verify specific parcels and factors relating to the parcels, as his maps are not designed for such accuracy. The on-the ground professionals need to verify the specifics before this can be used at that level.

Karen asked about how this new methodology affects the mining areas. Theobald stated that with the mining claims, he is using the assumption that they are being built on 70 acres or larger. Because of the parcel data that Theobald is working with, there are some polygons composed of multiple parcels larger than 70 acres. This is a limitation to the parcel data from the County. Karen asked how his data affects the reality of the potential development on the County's mining claims, as under current zoning, they may be built upon at a much smaller size. The 1194 potential parcels are included in each of the scenarios. Karen discussed the fact that the County data on mining claims and Forest service data do not match up, and she is concerned that we do not have an accurate sense of what we are looking at. Theobald felt that the numbers were correct with a 5-10% margin of error. He agreed that with the additional data that Lynn could provide, the mining parcels could be much more accurately portrayed. Lynn is willing to compare the USGS maps with the Assessor data, so that we could narrow the gap in data. Ken didn't feel that we needed to complicate the effort to that extent. He felt comfortable with the

underlying assumption that the maps and the study show generalized trends, and should not be expected to demonstrate perfect accuracy.

The ability to zoom in and look at specific parcels can be a double-edged sword. It is great to have the ability to do so, but ultimately this is merely the best representation of the data currently available. It is not perfectly exact, but in terms of the overall picture, it is a reasonable portrayal. Karen stressed that there is an element of guesswork in terms of the placement of the building envelopes on the mining claims. Lynn had suggested that the colors be changed slightly so that the dots from the different scenarios could be more clearly seen on any given map, and so that comparisons could more easily be drawn. He will work on that.

Lynn wanted to look more closely at 'Scenario E', the scenic corridor scenario. She wondered how the scenario worked; she wanted to know how the dots were moving under this scenario. Theobald clarified that while before the data was expressed in a more abstract way, this new methodology was much more specific. The idea behind the scenic corridor scenario was to minimize the development in the valley floor and along scenic corridors. This meant keeping building envelopes away from ridgelines, riparian areas, Ag. Lands, etc. The placement of the dots is random, while keeping within the parameters of the limitations set forth in the scenario. Theobald suggested using the cluster preference area to place the building envelopes within the parcel. Right now, the placement is random within the parcel. Using the cluster preference area might result in a representation that more closely follows what the stakeholder group had in mind. Irrigated Ag. Lands are considered 'scenic' for the purposes of the study. The current maps don't show the cluster preference area, but Theobald will tweak the maps to better show this.

John asked about scenarios D & F, and how they are represented in the town of Ridgway. The receiving areas are located in the County. Theobald asked about the Urban Growth Boundary, and clarified that he had to make a judgment call as to its impact on these scenarios in specific locations. This may have resulted to some irregularities. John just wanted to be sure that the group could understand and explain the maps. There are some large assumptions that have to be made in order to even look at the TDR scenarios, the devil would be in the details in terms of any policy-implementation. This does certainly show how County policies affect the municipalities. The numbers in the scenarios are County units only. The TDR scenarios do not show the growth in the municipalities.

The 5-acre building envelope was discussed. That number does not represent any kind of standard, Theobald has written a paper referring to a 100 meter building envelope, and that has gathered momentum in the academic community. He felt that the 5-acre envelope at the time seemed to be the most reasonable option. He currently has a grad student working on this issue, and hopes to have some better data later this fall. Ultimately, it was agreed that any change in this would not radically affect the study. Lynn suggested that rather than look at the 5 acres as a 'building envelope', that it may be more appropriate to look at it in terms of being an 'area of influence'. The 5 acres was meant to represent the disturbance zone of the residence, the access road, etc. Lynn suggested that the group present this concept as such. The affected zone cannot be larger than an individual parcel. This does not show the impact of access roads to mining claims and other instances of impact beyond parcel boundaries. This 5-acre affect zone is probably a conservative estimate.

Ken raised some concerns about the assumptions on the mapping near his own property (as an example). Dr. Theobald went to the underlying data, to show the group how that information comes into play on the mapping. The fundamental assumption is that every parcel is build-able was discussed. The timing of the creation of the lots, relative to the enactment of current county code was discussed, and the outcome of this could have a fairly significant impact on the scenarios. After looking through the data, and comparing the areas in question, the group came up with the number of 800, as being the potential number of affected parcels, meaning parcels potentially able to be built upon under the requisite 35-acre size. [. Sara would like to see if this can be broken out, and if not, then the group needs to make it known what the factors are.](#) Dr. Theobald asked if there would be some way to better vet this scenario? Heidi was unsure, as the BOCC had recently considered exactly such a parcel, and the applicant was faced with a large research project to prove their case. There is no easy way to differentiate these parcels with current county data. Karen suggested that the group leave the 800 potentials in the study, and just be prepared to explain the quandary. Lynn suggested going to the Assessor to see if she has any sort of available information that could help to clarify this issue. This could affect 15-20% of the buildable parcels. The majority of these parcels lie in the Alpine and Valley zones, and thus could have a significant impact on

County growth patterns. Another built-in assumption had to do with the creation of PUD's, and the allowability of these additional units.

Karen brought up the point that the study is not even considering the placement of Accessory Dwelling Units. She suggested that we may not need to get as detailed as we are considering going. We cannot prove that they are not buildable based on the current data. Accessory dwelling units were discussed, and it was agreed that rather than get into detail about how they are displayed, that the study remain as is, and just make sure the public knows that the potential exists for an ADU for every building envelope. Whether to include or not include a layer with ADU's was discussed, and Karen suggested that Theobald do a layer demonstrating the 33% ADU's that could be built. Chris Pike suggested looking at the double density scenario to show how an additional unit on each parcel could be demonstrated.

Sara discussed unbuilt inventory in existing subdivisions. If we know what is currently vacant, but previously platted, that alone can tell us a great deal about future impacts. The raw data exists, but it is not yet queried and incorporated into the report. The unsold inventory in existing subdivisions could be a fairly significant impact in the years to come as people begin retiring and building on these parcels.

**Deleted:** . Sara would like to see if this can be broken out, and if not, then the group needs to make it known what the factors are.

3. Public Comment - None

4. New Action Items

- Dr. Theobald will show "cluster preference areas" on scenario E
- The group will present the 'building envelope' as an 'area of affect' to more accurately portray it's intended meaning.
- Dr. Theobald will do a query on un-built inventory
- Dr. Theobald will try different colors for the various layers to more clearly show the differences between scenarios
- The County attorney will consider, and will speak with the Assessor as to the issue of buildable lots and their date of creation, to see if she can help clarify the issue of how many lots under 35 acres are actually buildable as there may be enough of these to skew the buildout data.

5. Next Meeting will be scheduled after work has been done on the draft of the final report.