



Above: On March 10, candidates for the three seats available on the Monument Board of Trustees answer questions in front of a dozen residents. From left are Mitch LaKind, Allison Thompson, Ann Howe, Jamy Unruh, and Jim Romanello. *Photo by Allison Robenstein.*

the assumption the infrastructure improvements can be included in the budget. Her decision-making process with regard to land development is to collaborate with the board.

Howe said she hopes the town can still maintain the quality of service but has seen funding revenue lacking, particularly with regard to the Police Department. "We have two special taxing districts, Village Center and Triview; part of the burden is on them. They don't contribute to the police force as it is, but that might be something we could negotiate."

Commercial versus residential

Commercial zoning ensures the town receives sales tax revenues, but in recent years,

many of the development requests have been to rezone business areas to residential. Bornstein asked the candidates their ideas to increase revenues needed to run the town as commercial property is decreased.

LaKind said if there are enough residential rooftops, the commercial will come, so he intends to work with the town's economic development committee and the Chamber to attract businesses. LaKind, a current planning commissioner, said, "I am not going to get in the way of private landowners and what they want to do with their land. If they want to sell their land to put [in] residential houses," I will approve that.

Thompson said, "At this

point, like I said, I would have to research that and learn about that, I don't know everything. I need to find a solid answer."

Unruh said, "I would definitely want to work with the town staff and seek expertise; it's very important to not give out your commercial lots to residential developers."

Affordable housing

With regard to the suggestion the town needs more affordable housing, Thompson said she likes the increases in the availability of apartments to drive competitive pricing.

LaKind said private landowners should not be told by the board how to develop their property, or determine the cost of rent, noting, "It's not

our role as trustees to tell a free market what it should be."

Romanello was one of the trustees who voted for the new apartments near Fairfield. See www.ocn.me/v19n8.htm#mbot.

Howe and Unruh both said if there were good jobs available within the town to Monument residents, they could afford housing here.

Leadership particularly in times of crisis, such as the current pandemic

The candidates were asked how they would handle the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Howe said because the town doesn't have a Department of Health, we would rely on the county for answers. She noted the mayor could be called upon to impose quarantines or call for virtual meetings. In fact, the board did declare a local emergency. See the BOT special meeting article on page 13.

LaKind said his leadership is collaborative to include town staff. "I'm here to support them," he said. During a crisis, he will request guidance from experts including elected officials, the Colorado Department of Health, and doctors. LaKind suggested there should be an announcement to prevent hoarding at local businesses.

Romanello said when he became a trustee, there was no town manager and no town attorney, and the treasurer was on the way out. He said the

excellent staff will guide him on his decision-making as a board member. His intent is to bring a spirit of unity and reach across the aisle to his fellow trustees to show the staff we've got your back. Romanello said as a member of the board, he and the others passed a resolution to align the town with the county with regard to emergency procedures. He would take direction from Chief of Police Sean Hemingway.

As a college sports team captain, Unruh said she learned it's important to show and teach while being collaborative. In this case, she suggested everyone should be following best practices but noted there isn't a lot as a town we can do. Unruh said she has strong convictions that she will follow but will listen to the citizens.

Thompson said during a crisis like this, "Wash your hands, that's all we can do at this point until we hear from experts" such as doctors, but she isn't going to panic. Her decision-making process will include "residents first, trustees second, town staff, sorry. I want to work with everybody but that's just the pecking order I'm seeing here."

To see candidate's statements to the OCN, go to <https://ocn.me/v20n3.htm#candidates>.

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Monument Planning Commission, March 11

New planning commissioners and BOA member sworn in; Zone Change and PD Sketch Plan for The Village approved

By Kate Pangelinan

New Planning Commissioners Bill Lewis and Sean White took their oaths of office at the March 11 Monument Planning Commission meeting, closely followed by Chad Blome, who has joined the Board of Adjustments. Lewis will serve as a regular member of the commission, and White has signed on as an alternate.

Mike Foreman, Monument town manager, introduced himself to the commission, stating his appreciation

for their work and offering to answer any questions.

A recording of the March 11 meeting can be found on YouTube on the Town of Monument's official channel. Documents pertaining to the meeting can be found on the town's website at www.townofmonument.org/263/Planning-Commission-Board-of-Adjustment.

The Village: Rezoning and PD Sketch Plan

The most involved portion of

this meeting concerned public hearings and recommendations to discuss a proposed rezoning and Planned Development (PD) Sketch Plan for The Village. The development is split into two parcels on either side of Jackson Creek Parkway, south of Highway 105. About 44 acres of this land are to the west, and 40 are to the east. The property is currently zoned for Planned Commercial Development (PCD), but the owner wants to rezone it to Planned Development (PD). This would allow for specifically tailored development. The land has been undeveloped for 40 years, and the applicant believes it will be more marketable to developers with the new zoning.

The Village was represented at this meeting by Andrea Barlow of NES Inc., who expressed the applicant's stance that more residents to support and work for Monument's businesses would benefit the town, as opposed to saving this area exclusively for commercial development. While a previous request to rezone this land was denied because more commercial development was considered desirable, it is the applicant's understanding that this particular area is not ideal for commercial development due to its placement, visibility

from the highway, and other factors. See www.ocn.me/v15n12.htm#mbot-1102.

In response to a question from Commissioner Mitchell LaKind, Barlow explained that there are developers interested in purchasing some of this land to use for residential purposes, but no interest currently from commercial developers. This Sketch Plan for The Village includes three housing options in differing price brackets: multi-family, single-family attached, and single-family detached. This would allow for more affordable housing in Monument, helping to bring people into the community. Commissioner Joshua Thomas said there is a need for diverse housing options in Monument, stating that it is often more difficult to find hourly workers for his organization's businesses in the town.

The proposed development would consist of 4.7 acres set aside for commercial development, 12.7 acres for multi-family uses, 15 acres for single-family detached homes, and 31.6 acres for single-family attached houses or townhomes. A total of 5.5 acres would be categorized as mixed use, and 14 acres would be designated for parks and trails. The applicant wants to

have parks throughout this development be linked by trails, so that people can walk between them. A 50-foot buffer would be provided around the boundary near I-25 to serve as a barrier between residents using this space and the highway. Lewis-Palmer School District 38 has requested money instead of land when building permits are secured for this development, and no problems are expected on that front.

This current Sketch Plan is a broad and conceptual understanding of the development, indicating the proposed use for the space and allowable density. Many finer details of the project will be considered later, including the need for an eventual roundabout or set of lights around this stretch of Jackson Creek Parkway, which will be reassessed with the Final PD Site Plan. The applicant is expected to have an exact number of residential units prepared by that time. Barlow said the town is working to secure 80% of the funding to widen Jackson Creek Parkway, but that the remaining 20% is expected to come from other sources. The Village development would contribute to this funding, in a way that is proportional to the project's effect on traffic.

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