

# Friends of Park County

P.O. Box 23, Pray, Montana 59065

*Promoting thoughtfully planned growth in order to protect and enhance Park County's vibrant communities, sustainable working lands, and healthy natural resources.*

## **Online Live Testimony of Frank Schroeder Before the Livingston Planning Board on the draft Growth Policy December 2, 2020**

Good evening. I am Frank Schroeder, Chair of the Board of Friends of Park County. My address is Pray, Montana, where I have lived for the past 23 years.

Friends of Park County recognizes that you are wrestling with how best to proceed on the draft Growth Policy.

We believe your highest - and right now, your most pressing - responsibility is to provide your opinions on critical policy issues to the City Commission.

This is the essential “advisory capacity” of planning boards identified in Montana State Code.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Montana Code Annotated (2019) Section **76-1-106. Role of planning board.** (1) To ensure the promotion of public health, safety, morals, convenience, or order or the general welfare and for the sake of efficiency and economy in the process of community development, ***if requested by the governing body, the planning board shall prepare a growth policy and shall serve in an advisory capacity to the local governing bodies*** establishing the planning board.

Those statutes also specify that you are to carry out your advisory role through adoption of a resolution.<sup>2</sup>

We have previously transmitted some proposed language for a Growth Policy resolution, which I hope you have available to view now.

That draft resolution reflects several of the policy recommendations we made to you at your last hearing. In summary, they are to:

- Make infill and redevelopment the highest priority for accommodating future growth. This includes expanded efforts to continue the revitalization of Livingston’s celebrated downtown.
- Confirm that future growth will be accommodated within the existing – and capacious – city limits, based on land and housing need and supply analyses, to be submitted to the City Commission by June, 2021 and updated every five years.
- Protect the remaining wild and natural features of the Yellowstone River and its riparian areas from the effects of nearby development and from

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<sup>2</sup> Montana Code Annotated (2019) Section **76-1-603. Adoption of growth policy by planning board.** After consideration of the recommendations and suggestions elicited at the public hearing, ***the planning board shall by resolution:*** (1) recommend the proposed growth policy and any proposed ordinances and resolutions for its implementation to the governing bodies of the governmental units represented on the planning board; (2) recommend that a growth policy not be adopted; ***or (3) recommend that the governing body take some other action related to preparation of a growth policy.***

overuse by new boat access points, pedestrian and bike paths recreation facilities and the like.

- Set a few, clear, priorities for implementation steps for the Growth Policy over the next 18 months.

It is **not** essential for you to achieve unanimity on the points in the resolution; even a divided vote provides useful guidance to the City Commission.

It is not essential that you vote on just our resolution, although we hope you do.

What we believe **is** essential, is that you move one or more resolutions articulating high level growth policies, debate them and then vote.

That concludes my remarks.

I respectfully request that you allow our consultants, Robert Liberty and Dennis Glick, to follow me with the remaining parts of our testimony.

Thank you for your time and service.