



Open Space and Trails Advisory Committee

*Minutes
November 18, 2010*

Meeting Summary

The committee received an update on the Open Space Fund and the status of the 40% Open Lands goal. There was a presentation on the potential Mountainview Egg Farm property acquisition followed by public comment and a discussion.

Roll Call

Present:

Annette Cislo

Rob Bodine

James Haedrich

Dennis Thompson

George Zack

William Olney

Patrick Tennyson

Walt Spader, Mayor Pro Tem, City Council Ex Officio Member

Absent:

Kevin Jacobs, Alternate, City Council Ex Officio Member

Others in attendance:

Kristan Pritz, Director of Open Space and Trails

Pete Dunlaevy, Open Space and Trails Planner

Kevin Standbridge, Assistant City and County Manager

Pat Soderberg, Director of Finance

City Councilmember Greg Stokes

Agenda Minutes

1. Call to Order OSTAC Meeting
2. Introduction of Interested Citizens and Public Comment on Issues not on the Evenings Agenda by Interested Citizens:

None.
3. Update on The Open Space Fund and 40% Open Lands Goal

Rob introduced Pat Soderberg, Director of Finance of Broomfield.

Pat Soderberg discussed the 40% open lands goal in the City and the current status towards that goal. Currently the open lands total in Broomfield stands at 32.5% of the total planning area. Pat also provided an overview the Open Space Sales Tax and the current financial status of open space acquisition funding.

Kristan reviewed the typical process of identifying and evaluating properties for acquisition, and provided an overview of the sites that have been prioritized for potential purchase through the Master Plan. The Master Plan outlined specific categories for rating the merits of different properties based on community values for open space and trails.

Kristan reviewed the properties that have already been acquired by the City and the highest priority possibilities for future acquisition.

>Rob-are the potential acquisition properties evaluated by cost as well as the selection criteria from the Master Plan?

>Kristan-cost is a factor but there are other factors like timing, the willingness of the landowner to sell, partnership potential, grants, etc. that are important to also look at. The willingness of the seller is the key issue.

>George-could you describe in more detail the factors that go into prioritizing the list, besides timing?

>Kristan-we have a list of criteria to prioritize the properties for acquisition that was developed in the OSPRT Master Plan, with things like size of the property, buffer zone areas, wildlife habitat, trail corridors, etc.

4. Presentation on the Mountainview Egg Farm including OSTAC Discussion and Comments

Kristan introduced the Egg Farm property and the potential participation by Broomfield in the ownership and a trail connection with the property. Kristan presented a PowerPoint on the project. She provided the history of this property and the prior consideration of acquiring the property by Broomfield. The property was purchased by Lafayette and Boulder County in 2009.

After the purchase of the property, Lafayette and Boulder County approached Broomfield with a proposal for Broomfield to participate in the acquisition retroactively by providing a share of the property cost. This agreement would allow Broomfield to have a trail connecting into the property from the existing trail in the Anthem development and also have an ownership/management stake in the property moving forward.

Walt Spader noted that the letter and conditions from Lafayette and Boulder County represents these two entities' proposal for this property

acquisition/agreement. The Broomfield City Council wanted to hear from OSTAC before they considered the proposal further and made any type of response. The conditions of the proposal are not necessarily set and could be negotiated.

Kristan reviewed the site conditions and the environmental concerns associated with the Phase 1 review of the property. Kristan also reviewed the provisions associated with the Two Creeks management plan that were put into place by Boulder County for the Egg Farm property. Kristan discussed the potential trail connections in this area and the current connections from Broomfield to neighboring communities.

>Greg Stokes-was the 20% interest in the property already reduced from the original proposal of 33%?

>Kristan-originally Boulder County and Lafayette proposed to do the purchase three ways at a 33% ownership interest for each party (Boulder County, Lafayette, and Broomfield); the most recent, current letter from Lafayette and Boulder County talks about a 20% contribution to the purchase price;

>Walt-the original discussion on the purchase was very different than what is being proposed now, the cost was higher, and Broomfield's revenues were different at the time; in consideration of the decreased revenues at that time, the City Council decided it was not prudent to pursue a joint purchase of the property.

Public Comment Period:

>Bill Kenyon, Anthem resident, leader of Anthem biking group, said residents are currently using State Highway 7 as a bike connection and there is a definite safety issue on State Highway 7; given the short distance to connect we would like to work the differences out and see a trail connection here; he would like to see this project pushed up as a priority.

>Steve Nelson, Anthem resident, the first criteria mentioned in the acquisition criteria is the scenic view, but the four buildings on the site are not very aesthetically pleasing; my question would be what is Boulder County referencing in the management plan for the Egg Farm when it notes that the buildings may be used for a possible future open space use that could apply to these buildings?

>Kristan, this would be through Boulder County's determination of compatible open space uses; the one possibility we have heard about, regarding the use of the buildings, is the use for the Birds of Prey program; however, this idea is not final in any way and was mentioned as just a possible use.

>Steve Nelson, this land is located outside Broomfield?

>Kristan, yes, it is in unincorporated Boulder County;

>Trudy Wood, Anthem resident, would the 600-foot buffer be required here from the agricultural land? We would prefer undeveloped land over agricultural land;

>KP: the 600-foot buffer would include the agricultural land, in Broomfield and in Boulder County, agricultural land is considered to be an open space use;

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- >Trudy Wood, she would like to have these trail connections for Anthem;
- >Tom Anderson, Anthem resident, would like to see some direct access from Anthem where it is currently developed instead of access to the south where more homes will be built in the future, we want this trail connection;
- >KP-reviewed the location of the proposed trail connection and clarified that the location is near the very southern buildings on the Egg Farm property;
- >Carol Rose, Anthem resident, the current use of State Highway 7 for bicycling is a safety issue, she will not use the current Highway 7 route, and would like to see this alternative trail through the Egg Farm, it is much safer;
- >CJ McKerrill-this is a very expensive trail connection proposal and is concerned that it appears that Broomfield would only have a limited say on the property; she suggested making some of the comments about trail safety concerns directly to Boulder County, would like to see the trail built without the expense that is currently proposed;
- >Ty Fouchey, Anthem resident, asked about mineral rights on the site, could they be acquired with the purchase?
- >Kristan-there are oil and gas wells on the site; she will check to see if the past purchase included mineral rights and get back to OSTAC on this question;
- >Ty Fouchey-the prairie dogs have already moved into Anthem; in regards to the safety issue, it is even worse heading east on State Highway 7 with the railing and very little space next to passing cars;
- >Sam Beeler, Anthem resident, would the trail specifications be the same for the connection as the Coal Creek Trails?
- >Kristan-that has not been decided, but the trail would be very similar—probably an 8-foot crusher fines trail;
- >Sam Beeler, do the Open Space acreage totals for Broomfield described in the Finance Report earlier include the Anthem Open Space?
- >KP-yes they do, but the numbers do not include the Egg Farm;
- >Tom Weber, Anthem resident; would like to add support for the trail connection and the safety issue along State Highway 7; what is the raptor group that is a possibility for this site? The buildings on this site do not seem to be compatible for that use;
- >KP-I am not aware of a specific request, this was one possibility that was considered; it would possibly be a similar use to the Birds of Prey Center at Rock Creek Farm, as these buildings may be able to be retro-fitted to accommodate this use; however, please know that this is just a possible use and is not being proposed officially to Broomfield.

OSTAC Discussion:

- >George-is there a precedent for trying to reach a financial agreement for the trail without taking on the cost for the entire project, could we purchase a trail connection at a cheaper price?
- >Walt -we have not had to do that; trail connections have been deemed to be mutually beneficial at other sites and we have not had to buy any connections before;
- >Rob-we would want a good alignment here as a priority too;

- >Kristan-we did work with the City of Westminster on the Zuni Bridge to connect the two open space properties on either side of the city boundary; this bridge now connects the two open spaces and trails into either community;
- >Walt-we want to hear from the committee on how this property fits as an open space acquisition, how the acquisition of this property should be prioritized among other opportunities; should this property be the next property acquisition for Broomfield?
- >Jim-would it be possible to connect the trail along State Highway 7 to the north into the Coal Creek Trail there?
- >Kristan-we have looked at this, there are some significant grades and a major drainage crossing here, so it would be a much more expensive connection in that location;
- >Rob-it is interesting to look at the project, as Walt has said, as two different issues – making the trail connection and making the land acquisition;
- >Dennis-if we do buy in on the project we still must wait until 2012 for the connection to take place;
- >George-this trail connection would provide access from Anthem to Bear Peak in Boulder basically; also, do we have estimates on what the maintenance costs will be for the property moving forward?
- >Kristan-I will update some of the preliminary maintenance costs for you as it has been some time since these were developed; current estimates now are about \$1,200 per year for our share of the maintenance plus the total very rough building removal costs of about \$415,000 to be divided among the owners;
- >Kevin-over time, the oil and gas removal will be done by the lease holders, not any of the municipalities involved;
- >Walt-some of these issues would have been easier to consider before the purchase, it is complicated now as the land is already purchased, and we must consider whether this property is a priority to add to Broomfield as an asset;
- >Rob-perhaps we could proceed by evaluating other priorities in the community and gather some information on other properties for a better comparison;
- >George-regarding the farm use, are there other properties that have similar farming on open space?
- >Kristan-yes, The Field, Broomfield County Commons, Nordstrom, Davis, and Wottge Open Spaces; we do have numerous properties that are used for agriculture; they are leased to local farmers for agricultural uses and maintenance of the land;
- >Patrick-do the profits go back into the land on these sites?
- >Kristan-the revenue is very limited and we allow the farmer to keep this in exchange for their costs, equipment, and their work to keep the land up and take care of the weeds;
- >Annette-is it correct that we would not have a say in the management with the existing plan?
- >Kristan-we would be involved in any further modifications to the current approved Management Plan, but presently we would be agreeing to abide by their existing Management Plan for the property; we would be an equal decision-maker along with Boulder County and Lafayette moving into the future

on management decisions that would arise; this would be similar to our management/ownership on Metzger Farm with Westminster;

>Annette-if something was put up on the property that the neighboring Broomfield residents did not like, what would their recourse be if we do not become an owner;

>Walt-Broomfield staff and Council would be contacted first, then onto Lafayette and Boulder County; one possibility in the negotiations would be to request a say in the property or perhaps to have a say on what happens with the buildings;

>George-do we know if Lafayette and Boulder County have also asked Erie to participate in this project?

>Kevin-Erie does not go south of State Highway 7, they are not being asked about this to our knowledge, they are being approached about other projects to the north;

>Kristan-I believe that Erie is part of the Great Outdoors Colorado grant along with Lafayette and Boulder County and has responsibilities to build the underpass beneath State Highway 7 and the trail heading north of SH 7 in to Erie;

>Dennis-agrees with Rob, we need to review priorities and other possible sites for acquisition so we can have a context for our recommendation and make a better comparison; we have some commitments to Wildgrass trails to consider and others sites as well;

>Kristan-we will schedule a meeting on a Saturday morning to visit other potential sites for acquisition before the meeting with Lafayette in January.

6. Approve Minutes of the October 28, 2010 OSTAC Meeting

Annette motions for approval; Dennis seconds; minutes approved

7. Updates:

-Front Range Prairie Dog Working Group Recap –meeting on November 4th attended by about 25 members of the working group.

-January 27th OSTAC Meeting date Confirmed

-Lafayette Open Space Committee meeting January 6th, in Lafayette

8. Other as Desired by OSTAC

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.



Minutes Prepared by Pete Dunlaevy

Approved by OSTAC on January 27th, 2011.