



Open Space and Trails Advisory Committee

*Minutes
July 30, 2009*

Meeting Summary

The committee reviewed the Willow Run Open Space Fence and Native Landscape Buffer project and supported the project moving forward to City Council. The DRAFT Co-Existence with Wildlife Policy was reviewed by OSTAC.

Roll Call

Present:

Annette Cislo
Pascale Fried
Dan Wilkie
Councilmember Bette Erickson
Councilmember Randy Ahrens

Absent:

Judy Enderle
Patrick Tennyson
Rob Bodine

Others in attendance:

Kevin Standbridge, Assistant City and County Manager
Kristan Pritz, Director of Open Space and Trails

Agenda Minutes

1. Call to Order OSTAC Meeting and Review of Meeting Procedures by Annette Cislo.
2. Introduction of Interested Citizens:
Jaan Raamot, Gary Lameris, Elizabeth Law Evans, Sam Taylor, Bill Bates, Ginni Bates, Lila Vestal, Martin Verwiebe, Harry McConnell
3. Public Comment on Issues not on the Evenings Agenda by Interested Citizens:
None.
4. Update and Review of the Proposed Willow Run Open Space Wood Fence and Native Landscape Buffer
Kristan Pritz, Director of Open Space and Trails

-Annette- explained that the discussion would be organized in the following manner: staff presentation, citizens comments, and OSTAC comments.

-Kristan- reviewed the results of the public open house and discussed the proposed plan. The purpose of the project is to 1) preserve the site as open space; 2) minimize migration of the prairie dogs from the open space into the adjacent neighborhoods while providing for the protection of the existing colony; and 3) minimize the impacts of numerous social trails and motorized vehicles on the open space. She explained that notification was sent to the neighborhood and to the Enterprise about the OSTAC meeting. The information on the project was also on the Open Space and Trails web site. She asked OSTAC if they had any comments or concerns about the project. The next step will be to bid the project and present the contract to the City Council for consideration. The estimated cost of the native landscaping, wood open space fence and wire, irrigation, and water is \$82,500 and falls within the amount budgeted for the project.

-Annette- asked for citizen comment.

-Gary Lameris- purchased a house about a year ago adjacent to the open space. He purchased the house for a view of the open space and prairie dog colony. He wants to keep his view of the open space. Each neighbor has a fence on their yard that protects their yard. He does not see the project as an improvement to the neighborhood. He is concerned about the height of the shrubs as they will block the view of the open space.

-Lila Vestal- is in favor of the project because she would like to prevent the poison of the prairie dogs and limit motorized vehicles in the open space. She would like to see an access point at the pump house location. She likes the pump house access because of the views of the creek and the access to the bridge. She also understands limiting the social trails through the colony and can live with just one access in the middle of the site as depicted on the proposed plan. She asked that the prairie dogs not be killed in the area particularly west of the pump house.

-Martin Verwiebe- Most of the people like the west access point and seem to use it more than the center access point.

-Lila Vestal- She likes the project and would like to see it approved.

-Bette- Can the staff build the fence and plant the shrubs? This seems pretty easy to do and would save money.

-Kevin- With the vacant positions on the maintenance staff, this work would probably take a longer time to complete if we used staff because of the other duties they have to carry out.

-Kristan- we may be able to use volunteers for the planting if we can ensure that the drip irrigation system would not be damaged

-Randy- asked about the line items for the budget.

-Kristan- reviewed the line items and said the \$82,842 is the total estimated cost of the project. Randy asked about the density of the prairie dogs and thought this may be contributing to the pressure to migrate from the open space into the neighborhood.

-Pascale- we have discussed the project several times. Letting the site remain as it is could be an option but it was felt that we should see what we could do

to try to minimize the euthanization of prairie dogs. The vegetation is a good idea along with the fence.

-Dan-supports the project as it shows that the city has made a reasonable effort to address the migration of prairie dogs into the neighborhood. This project can also serve as a demonstration project and if it is successful, we can use this concept in other locations. He would like to see the resident's view concern addressed by the use of dwarf shrubs to keep the view of the open space.

-Pascale-believes that there was an issue of prairie dogs crossing the street and the impact on the neighbors might cause some people to advocate for the removal of the colony. The prairie dog issue is emotional. The concept could be applied to other locations if it is successful. This is a demonstration project that could be useful to the city. As far as the social trails, it would be best to consolidate the trails in this location. She appreciated the citizen saying that she could live with just one access point.

-Martin Verwiebe-asked if the fence could be built without the landscaping

-Kristan—yes but it serves to screen the fence and to block the views out for the prairie dogs to migration areas. Also, other neighbors like the landscaping and she would be concerned to remove the landscaping without consulting with the other neighbors that did not attend the OSTAC meeting as they thought the landscaping was part of the project.

-Dan-the landscaping also provides some habitat for other wildlife.

-Annette-concern about infrastructure cost for the water but knows that it is necessary for the survival of the shrubs.

-Kristan-let's summarize OSTAC's direction on the project:

-OSTAC agrees staff should proceed with the project to Council

-Staff will try to find ways to decrease the cost of the project—particularly the water cost as much as possible

-Dwarf rabbit brush will be used along the residences on Alcott Street to address the resident's concern about view impacts

-The access point will be moved to the pump house

-Kevin- members of the audience that wish to be informed of the City Council meeting review of the project should write their names and emails on the notebook being passed around and staff will be sure to inform you of the meeting date

5. Review and Comment on the DRAFT Co-Existence with Wildlife Policy

-Annette- introduced the project and noted that Broomfield had two dog and coyote encounters involving humans that City Council to request that staff work on a Co-Existence with Wildlife Policy.

-Kristan- noted that changes requested by OSTAC members at the last meeting were highlighted in the DRAFT. A new section on other types of wildlife was also added that addresses Canada Geese, foxes, raccoons, skunks, small birds, snakes, squirrels, rabbits, insects, bees/pollinators, beaver, and other wildlife such as moose, bears, and mountain lions. A summary of the prairie dog policy will also be included. This is the final opportunity to add comments before the draft is presented to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee and City Council.

July 30, 2009

Page 4

- Elizabeth Law Evans- please add full cites into the document
- Kristan-yes we plan to do this
- Bette-what happened to the coyotes in Anthem over the last few weeks?
- Kevin-explained that high intensity hazing will be done in the Anthem area. Protocol with the police was developed and training will be done for certain staff members. Paint ball guns will be used. The approach was developed using the DRAFT Policy, Colorado Division of Wildlife, Broomfield staff and the Anthem Homeowners Association.
- Dan-id of coyotes could be helpful to that coyotes are not killed indiscriminately as the coyote would be identified by the paint
- Randy-also noted that there are many rabbits in Anthem that are probably causing the coyotes to move in closer to the residential areas.
- Randy-2.2 mention 40% open lands should be built in and around Broomfield County; page 4 spell out Foundation as Broomfield Open Space Foundation; page 3, page 8 make the guidelines more prominent graphically and mention on page one of the coyote section that for co-existence guidelines see page 8; page 21 mention plants that deer do not eat and some of these plants;
- Dan- page 8 glad to see the Chicago study is noted as it puts the coyote issue into perspective;
- Pascale: pleased to see that we added the other animals to the policy even if it is in a cursory manner; it is good information; Judy had comments did you incorporate them and also please share the comments with OSTAC; added cat and bird issue which was also helpful; we can add new species to the list as things come up
- Kristan-I do not have Judy's comments at this time-she has been very busy but they will not be in the draft for PRAC—she will let Judy know; if comments are provided they will be shared with OSTAC so the group can discuss
- Kevin-mentioned Judy helped last week with the Anthem coyote issue
- Bette-add Please..... page 29 need to add "see" after the word Please
- Elizabeth-page 8 add prairie dogs to last sentence third paragraph.
- Annette-When this is presented to city council do you think this will bring up the dog leash enforcement issue? I am out on the open space properties frequently. I keep seeing a lady that knows the rule and she ignores the rules. Do we have any type of tabulation of if a citizen gets a warning of dogs on leash?
- Kevin—I think we can get warnings and citations information from the Police Department. The City Council took a straw poll on whether staff should re-evaluate the leash law enforcement policy. The item did not get a majority of support so staff is not pursuing this issue. However, if it is felt that the leash law should be addressed, you may attend council and make this request.
- Annette: a public education effort might be good to encourage citizens to bring their bags to the white tubes that hold the waste pick up bags
- Pascale-feels that only about 10% of people have their dogs off leash from seeing the area that she uses, this is an informal analysis but this is what she has noticed
- Randy-most of the people he sees with dogs off leash are in the parks; they are typically throwing Frisbees to their dogs to play fetch

-Dan-noticed an increase of use of leashes after the killing of the coyotes BCC; excellent work on the policy document

-Kristan-staff will incorporate your comments and will be attending the August PRAC meeting to present the DRAFT policy to committee members; if there are no major requests for changes—staff will proceed to a study session with City Council

6. Approve Minutes of the June 25th, 2009 OSTAC Meeting
Will vote on at next meeting .when a quorum is present

7. Updates

Kristan reviewed the following updates:

-Prairie Dog Plague: An outbreak occurred at Great Western Open Space site during the week of July 13th. Health and Human Services worked closely with Open Space and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment on the response. The burrows have been dusted with flea powder.

-Plaster Reservoir Fire: Juveniles started a fire accidentally on the east side of Plaster Reservoir the week of July 13th. An area the size of about a half acre was burned. It is anticipated that the vegetation will grow back and there will not be any long-term damage.

-Annette asked about Siena Reservoir as she is seeing a lot of use on the site. --Kevin-We are working to have the site policed more and to erect new signs on the property making it clear that the water is non-potable and swimming is not allowed; this issue as it has been brought to the City Council's attention too.

-Anthem Coyotes: Several incidents of interaction between humans and aggressive coyotes have occurred in recent weeks. As a result, intense hazing will be conducted and a group of volunteers will be walking the area to observe any coyote activity and also provide the coyote brochures to interested citizens. This effort was coordinated with the Division of Wildlife, Broomfield, and the Anthem Homeowners Association. As Kevin explained earlier, intense hazing will also be used.

-Boulder County Advisory Board Meeting: This meeting was originally scheduled for August 22nd and will be rescheduled. Kristan will let OSTAC know the new date when she hears from Boulder County staff. The date is likely to be in October.

-Boulder County US 287 Bridge for Rock Trail: The bridge is placed and the final trail work is being completed.

-Egg Farm: The Egg Farm acquisition was approved by both Boulder County and Lafayette. A closing is scheduled for early this fall.

-Lambertson Farms Trails: Kristan suggested waiting on this presentation until Rob is present as he was the committee member that requested the information.

8. Other as desired by OSTAC

-Annette: noticed signs by the Crystal Pines neighborhood trail connection to the Lake Link Trail that indicate time for use; Kristan provided background on why the signs were added in the cut through the neighborhood trail as there had been

July 30, 2009

Page 6

some noise problems for the neighbors. Staff added the signs to address the noise concerns so that the HOA would continue to keep this trail open to the public.

-Pascale: July 4th seemed to work well did anyone else notice anything; she did not notice any impacts on the open space

Members did not have any concerns.

-Bette-went to the Soapstone Prairie Open Space north of Fort Collins; you can walk to Wyoming in 3. 2 miles; beautiful parcel to see if you are in the area; it is located on the west side of I-25

-Pascale: talked about doing a field trip for open space properties; she would like to do this at an upcoming meeting

-Annette: would like to see the Great Western Open Space site;

-Kristan-yes we can and should do this as it is one of our goals for this year

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



Minutes Prepared by Kristan Pritz

Approved by OSTAC on 8/27/09