

OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
ABBREVIATED MINUTES
May 30th, 2013
3:30 – 5:30 pm

Present: Adam Liljeblad
Ethel MacDonald
Gary Knudsen
Anna Noson
Gabe Millar
Tim Aldrich

Absent:
Matt Barnes
Patrick Duffy
Jenny Tollefson
Mary Manning
Dan Spencer
Maureen Bookwalter
Beth Hahn, Park Brd Rep

Also Present: Jackie Corday, Open Space Program Mgr, Jim Habeck

General Updates:

Jackie informed members about her being part of a small team of folks working on submitting a \$4.5 million federal TIGER grant to construct the Missoula to Lolo Trail along Hwy 93. The City, County and 6 other organizations contributed funds to hire DJ&A to prepare the grant (Ethel, Ginny Sullivan at Adventure Cycling, and Jean Belangienye from Lolo were successful in raising \$3000 towards the grant prep fees). There is so little possible funding sources for constructing the trail that even though TIGER grants are extremely competitive (only 4% approved), it was worth trying. The grant will be submitted June 3rd and we'll know by early September if the project was chosen. Ethel said BWAM is working with Adventure Cycling to kick off a fund-raising capital campaign for the trail.

Tim wanted to let members know that Patrick Duffy submitted his resignation due to the fact that the April meeting date had changed from April 11th to the 18th and that we added an additional meeting on May 30th. He stated in an email to Tim and Jackie that "I don't think the way I am anticipating scheduling my retirement plans is a good fit with that - I see too many unforeseen absences with the flexible nature of the OSAC schedule." As an FYI for other members, Jackie said that OSAC meetings usually get moved 1-2 times per year from the 2nd Thursday to another date and once in a while an extra meeting is added if needed for some special circumstance. Council is responsible for appointing a replacement.

Rough Cut of the Property in the Miller Creek Valley

Jackie updated members of 3 additional meeting she had since the May 9th meeting: 1) fieldtrip with CFAC staff and board members to investigate the feasibility of the property for an incubator farm site; 2) meeting with Donna and Morgan to further discuss land management issues; and 3) fieldtrip with Morgan to see the last piece of property that we hadn't seen yet – the narrow northern panhandle. Unfortunately, on the CFAC fieldtrip we found out why the owner's counter-offer had stated no water rights would be transferred to the City – it's because they sold off the large majority of them to Mountain Water to develop 4 mega wells to provide water for approximately 1,400 new residences in the immediate area. No water, no farming. Jackie spoke DNRC staff to find out if the City would be able to install several 35gpm wells in order to perform wetlands restoration work, which might be manageable with a 35gpm well located close to the area being restored. DNRC said that was likely very possible and the City would not need a permit if the area being restored could be done within that 35gpm capacity.

In regards to the meeting with Donna and Morgan, we decided that since CFAC won't be able to farm (and hence no constant caretaker watching over the property), that our offer should include the large metal sided shop located adjacent to the road. It would be a great place for the City to store the equipment needed to take care of the property

and give us a presence on the land. Donna also said it will be important for the Parks land management maintenance budget to increase by about \$25,000 if we take on this property.

The narrow strip of property is especially beautiful with big towering Ponderosa's and a lovely stretch of the Bitterroot. There is a well-established game trail the whole way that is in a location suited for hiking. It ties into an area that will be dedicated as common area for the Teton subdivision. Jackie has informed the seller's representative that the City will need a public access easement through the common area to ensure permanent public access. Jackie also shared a long due diligence email list that she prepared and sent to WGM – info needed before another offer could be made including, mineral remoteness report, environmental report, road easements and maintenance, development rights, and outbuildings.

Jim Habeck expressed concern over horse use on future public trails in the riparian area. Jackie said that the issue would be evaluated but that generally horse use will not be appropriate for all trails on this property, especially right along the river where the topography is steep and we want to keep the trail narrow. Jim also mentioned that Peter Lesica could likely help us prepare a baseline plant inventory.

Members then prepared the Rough Cut and unanimously scored the project high enough to proceed to the final evaluation.

We adjourned at about 5:30pm.