

OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
ABBREVIATED MINUTES  
June 13, 2013  
4:00 – 5:30 pm

<b>Present:</b>	Adam Liljeblad	Bert Lindler	<b>Absent:</b>
	Ethel MacDonald	Dan Spencer	Matt Barnes
	Gary Knudsen	Tim Aldrich	Mary Manning
	Anna Noson	Maureen Bookwalter	Jenny Tollefson
	Gabe Millar	Beth Hahn, Park Brd Rep	

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

**Final Evaluation of the Property in the Miller Creek Valley**

Jackie updated members of 6 additional meetings she had since the May 30<sup>th</sup> OSAC meeting: 1) fieldtrip with 6 City Council members to gage support for the project – they were very supportive; 2) meeting with Ryan Chapin of FVLT to further discuss the terms of the conservation easements; 3) fieldtrip with City Building Inspector and Morgan to inspect the existing shop building to determine its condition and approximate value; 4) meeting with the Mayor, City Attorney Jim Nugent, City CAO Bruce Bender to go over the terms of the seller’s counter-offer; 5) meeting with Nancy Heil and James McCubbin to go over legal issues; and 6) meeting with Mark Sommers from American Public Land Exchange to discuss his review of the title report as it has 84 exceptions instead of the typical 20 or so.

She then discussed some of the factors impacting the property’s value, both positive and negative, but that the factors are difficult to quantify: (1) almost 2 miles of Bitterroot River frontage with good access at the southern end of the property; (2) proximity to town – just far enough out on the edge but close enough to have more of a mid-range per/acre value verses properties either in town or way out of town; (3) no surface water rights will be transferred with the property – this means minimal farming can be done with 35gpm or less wells and grazing; (4) BPA transmission substation EIS will be prepared over the next 2-3 yrs and preliminary scoping identified this property as well as 4 other sites in Western MT as potential locations – BPA has power of eminent domain; (5) Existing mega transmission towers and well as numerous utility easements across the property.

Jackie mentioned the previous open space purchases of river front property (Tower Street and Kelly Island Addition) ranged from \$500/acre (no road access, but still appraised at \$1,500/acre) to \$2,500/acre (access from Tower St). She had initially offered \$1,500/acre and they countered with \$2000. She believes that that is not far off from where the final offer will be. She is still looking into the value of the shop and explained that Morgan and Donna want the next offer to include that building and the land about 70’ north of the shop to have room for a small parking lot. Because this property is relatively isolated in comparison to Mt. Jumbo, Sentinel, North Hills etc, Parks needs a presence on the land and a place to store equipment needed to take care of the property. She explained that if OSAC members score the project high enough to recommend approval, she will make another offer that will have numerous contingencies, including satisfactory creation of the open space parcel (it doesn’t exist right now), satisfactory access, appraisal, Phase I Environmental Report, Mineral Remoteness Test, satisfaction with the Title Report, and City and County approvals.

Members then began discussing the merits of the property before performing the final evaluation. Gary stated the property has wide spread community values beyond the Linda Vista/Maloney Ranch area. Everyone agreed that the river frontage, riparian and wetland habitat for birds and wildlife, and scenic qualities are outstanding and would make a great addition to the open space system, especially considering that this would be the first public access open space project in this area.

During one of the OSAC fieldtrips, Morgan had discussed the possibility of removing the berm in the southern portion of the property that blocked the river from flowing in a small eastern channel. This was apparently done by the

landowners many years ago to increase pastureland. Dan commented that removing the berm would increase the wetlands/habitat values of the land but make it harder for recreation access. This will be something to weigh and consider when the land management plan is drafted. Jim Habeck asked if the Linda Vista/Maloney residents had been notified yet of the City's purchase. Jackie responded that neighbors usually are not contacted at this stage of the negotiations when an offer hasn't been accepted yet. If an offer is accepted, there will be 3 public meetings to gain County and City approval for bond funding.

Members then completed the Final Evaluation for the property and unanimously scored the project high enough to recommend approval to City Council.

We adjourned at about 6:00pm.