



Open Space and Trails Advisory Committee

*Minutes
July 28, 2016*

Meeting Summary

The committee reviewed and discussed the update on the Anthem Ranch Prairie Dog Preserve, potential future open lands acquisitions, comprehensive plan updates, Palisade Park North Site Development Plan/PUD, and the status of the Rocky Mountain Greenway Trail.

Roll Call

Present:

Tim Griffin, Chair
Ray Churgovich
Doug Grumann
Todd Cohen
Joel Hendrickson
Councilmember Liz Law-Evans

Absent:

Terra Lenihan
Patrick Tennyson
Councilmember Mike Shelton

Visitors:

Norma Crumbley, SWCA Environmental Consultants

Other staff and consultants in attendance:

Kevin Standbridge, Deputy City and County Manager
Kristan Pritz, Open Space and Trails Director
Holly D'Oench, Open Space and Trails Assistant

Agenda Minutes

1. Call to Order by Tim Griffin, 6:07 p.m.
2. Introduction of Interested Citizens

Norma Crumbley, SWCA Environmental Consultants.
3. Update on Proposal to Adjust the Anthem Ranch Prairie Dog Preserve Boundary

Kristan explained where the anthem prairie dog preserve is located in the southwest corner of the Anthem Ranch neighborhood. She provided background on the creation of the preserve and how it was established before Broomfield's prairie dog policy existed. The trail that parallels the preserve intersects the original boundary fence line, therefore allowing

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prairie dogs to leave the area reserved for them. Residents asked Open Space to adjust the fence line to prevent this from happening. To resolve this issue, the fence line will be moved so the trail is fully outside the prairie dog preserve. The work will be funded by a Prairie Dog Endowment Fund (Endowment Fund) that the Broomfield Prairie Dog Policy established. Monies for this Endowment Fund go to research, habitat enhancement and other prairie dog related projects. Private sector developers pay into the fund to use public land for relocations or to remove prairie dogs from private land to allow for development.

>Ray, does the fence go underground?

>Kristan, yes, with chicken wire several feet. Although the fencing cannot guarantee 100% protection from encroachment, it is helpful. The Broomfield Prairie Dog Policy calls for a 500-foot setback from residential development but as this preserve was established pre-Policy, the preserve is closer to homes.

>Doug, does the fence go all along west side?

>Kristan, no it's just a wire fence that borders the Boulder County open space.

>Tim, do we have anyone who looks at trails for prairie dogs?

>Kristan, yes, at least once a year, the Public Works and Open Space staffs review sites for issues where prairie dogs encroach into buffer areas along development or encroach into trails, landscaping, athletic fields, dam embankments that create public safety or public health issue.

>Ray, what determines whether you exterminate or donate prairie dogs?

>Kristan, the Broomfield Prairie Dog Policy goes into detail about the actions that are allowed to be taken when property is proposed for development if a public or private developer has prairie dogs on the property. The first option is relocation, then removal to a recovery program and lastly, extermination. To date, no public or private developer has had to exterminate prairie dogs as the first response but instead has either completed relocation or removed the prairie dogs to a wildlife recovery program. Extermination is allowed when one or more of the public safety/health related issues arise as was mentioned earlier. There was an extensive public process used to create the Policy that involved a professional wildlife biologist, CO Parks and Wildlife, OSTAC, City Council, and numerous public meetings.

4. Overview of Potential Future Open Lands Acquisition

Kevin Standbridge explained how open space acquisitions happen through development. He explained how Open Space staff reviews development proposals and for residential projects, a public land dedication is typically required. For larger projects, OSTAC will appoint a subcommittee of several OSTAC members to look at the potential plan and provide comments. Kevin also explained that when suitable open space becomes available, the owner can approach the City and County of Broomfield to see if there is interest in purchasing the land. OSTAC will discuss the potential acquisition and the City Council works on the details of the acquisition if they agree the purchase is appropriate. In looking at proposals, we work with OSTAC to review the appropriateness of the acquisition given the suitability criteria in the Open Space, Parks, Recreation, and Parks Master Plan.

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Open Space staff works with finance and city council on the money aspect to determine if we have the funds.

>Kristan, to determine appropriate offers, we complete appraisals and also some negotiation is typically involved. negotiate.

Kristan gave a presentation describing and defining open lands and open space. The definition of open space was developed with OSTAC. She described the purposes of having open space preservation such as protecting natural features and providing citizens with a place for passive recreation. Kristan also presented the milestones that open space and trails has had such as the ¼ cent Open Space and Parks Sales and Use Tax passing in 1994. Kevin Standbridge added that the catalyst for this sales tax was the potential development of The Field in 1994. The Broomfield Comprehensive Plan was updated in 1995 and called for creating interconnected open spaces throughout Broomfield, defined open space, and called for a goal of 44% open lands in the future developed portions of Broomfield. In 1999, the Open Space and Trails Advisory committee was created and in 2000, the Open Space Department was established. In 2005, the Broomfield Comprehensive Plan was updated and the Open Space, Parks, Recreation and Trails Master were created. Both plans reflected a goal of 40% open lands. (Kristan noted that the percentage changed primarily because of GIS mapping technology improvements over the tools available when the 1995 Comprehensive Plan was completed).

Kristan described that there are specific guidelines for land acquisition and a map noting general locations for areas for acquisition. She asked Tim Griffin to talk about the current update of the Comprehensive Plan as he, as well as Councilmember Liz Law-Evans, have been working on this project through a community task force.

>Tim Griffin, the Open Space and Parks subgroup made what we call a bubble map; we drew bubbles around parks so you could see distances didn't equally touch areas. Some places were touched by park bubble, others not. The concept was to see the distribution of open space, parks, and open lands across the community with the goal of providing an equitable distribution of these lands throughout the community, particularly in the northeast portion of Broomfield and some of the original neighborhoods in Broomfield.

>Todd, is there anything that keeps golf course from being converted to development?

>Kevin, zoning limitations typically would govern something like this. It would be difficult to put a golf course into development. For example, Broomfield owns the land under the Broadlands Golf course.

>Ray, do cemeteries count?

>Kristan, yes—they are counted in the overall 40% open lands number.

>Tim, 40% was a hot topic in the task force discussions for the Comprehensive Plan update, people supported it. We came up with this rationale: our public comments showed that citizens were very supportive of open space and parks. We want to stay on the path of what people want and appreciate for open space and parks. Question being: should we

follow the 40% closely or go with quality of service? It could end up at 39 or 40% but the level of service is what counts. We didn't want to be driven just by a number. Tim shared copies of the latest draft chapter on Open Lands from the Comp Plan Update. The current update of the Comprehensive Plan has as its draft goal: "Provide approximately 40% of Broomfield's planning area as open lands. Policy: Develop and maintain an integrated and comprehensive system based on level of service to inventory, evaluate and prioritize potential open lands for purchase and/or preservation. The appropriate Level of Service to Broomfield residents should closely resemble the City's existing commitment to open lands."

>Liz, this is most significant idea to come out of comprehensive plan update. Some areas don't have the same level of service.

>Tim, we need to make parks a resource to the neighborhood. There are challenges present. The bubble map showed where we can focus.

Kristan described the numbers showing how many acres of open lands Broomfield has. Kristan, Kevin, and Nancy Harrold worked on mapping of possible sites and noted there was general discussion about these sites at the PRAC meeting last week and OSTAC at tonight's meeting.

>Liz, what's the latest formula about lands that are inside or outside Broomfield?

>Kristan, we have included lands outside Broomfield that we have paid for in the denominator and numerator when calculating the percentage for open lands in the Planning Area.

OSTAC members examined a presented map that detailed potential open land purchases. Kristan gave an overview of the map, explaining that each site has been compared against specific criteria like connectivity and habitat value and has been ranked. They include open space, parks, and open lands. Combining parks and open could be a nice project like the one seen at Broomfield County Commons. Kristan described individual properties and their viability, mentioned recent purchases like the Harmer property.

>Liz, I have a question about the formula: when developers go with cash in lieu, is there a formula when they can give cash instead of land? Are cash donations counted in planning but not open lands?

>Kevin, cash in lieu doesn't count as open lands, until the money is purchased to buy land.

>Kevin, Hoopes is not open space, it's not under charter that protects open space. It's owned by water fund, and under their zoning. It is open lands.

>Kristan, we want to give you an idea of where we're going with this, a council study session will happen to look at CIP projects. A discussion will happen regarding purchasing open lands. She reviewed several possible properties for open space and parks acquisition.

5. Update on Comprehensive Plan

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Tim explained that the update on the plan has been mostly covered, the first draft is being drawn up and will present to public. One key idea for the update is that they looking at executive summaries for each section. It will have highlights for ease of reading. They don't know if it will be a brochure with highlights. It will go to public within next month. Tim requested comments and feedback from staff and OSTAC members on the draft.

>Kristan, the numbers will be updated

>Ray, how will it be presented to the public?

>Tim, they don't have location established yet. The idea of putting it at the Paul Derda Recreation Center was received very well. We probably will do something similar. Maybe on the website as well.

Kevin, there will be some form of traditional public meeting on September 14. No location determined yet, but maybe Health and Human Services Building or the 1stBank center.

>Doug, can you explain difference between policy and action step? Who determines if an action step gets done?

>Kevin, the comprehensive plan is a policy document, it's not regulatory. We work with City Council on an annual basis. The departments are expected to implement. The planning staff ranks action steps high, low, med for implementation.

>Doug, so they are a guideline?

>Kevin, yes, but things can change.

6. Update on Palisade Park North Amendments

Kristan explained the location of this neighborhood and the most recent discussions on park land and the trail corridor along the west side of the project. There may be an opportunity to use cash-in-lieu to purchase nearby land for the community.

7. Rocky Mountain Greenway Trail Status Report

Kristan explained that the Federal Lands Access Plan Grant was reviewed by city council and numerous conditions were applied to the grant submittal. Soil sampling along the Greenway Trail's proposed route through Rocky Flats was deemed a condition by council. We're working on how the soil sampling will be addressed with other community representatives and the US Fish & Wildlife Service—this is a condition that City Council has set before proceeding any farther with the project.

>Kevin, we will come back to City Council has this project evolves.

>Tim, other communities are in same position, they want same thing.

>Ray, is Superior still out?

>Kristan, yes, Superior is not participating in the FLAP grant. USFWS is hearing concerns from Superior and others. We will hear about the status of the federal lands grant next week.

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8. Review and Approval of the April 28, 2016 OSTAC Meeting Minutes
Ray motioned to approve, Doug seconds; motion passes unanimously.

9. OSTAC Updates

- Broomfield Open Space Foundation Fundraiser, Brunner Farmhouse, August 27, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.
- Comments/observations from OSTAC members that attended the Open Lands Tour on July 21
- E-Bikes—US 36 Bikeway and Other Trails
- Broomfield Open Space Foundation Speakers Series Fall 2016
- National Night Out, August 2, Broomfield County Commons
- Starburst Award won for Ruth Roberts Connector Trail
- McKay-Lambertson Open Lands Plan
- Council Study Session on Open Lands Acquisition-August 16 (tentative)

10. Other Topics as Desired by OSTAC
None.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:59 p.m.

Minutes Prepared by Holly D'Oench.

Approved on August 24, 2016 by OSTAC.