



Open Space and Trails Advisory Committee

*Minutes
October 26, 2011*

Meeting Summary

The committee met with the City of Westminster Open Space Board and reviewed the Metzger Farm Open Space Construction Project. The committees reviewed the fishing potential in the east pond at Metzger Farm, and also provided several brief updates on issues of mutual interest.

After the joint meeting, the Broomfield committee received updates on coyote research/outreach and the Alexx and Michael's Pond pump system and building plans.

Roll Call

Present:

William Olney
Dennis Thompson
Annette Cislo
Rob Bodine
Patrick Tennyson

Absent:

Kevin Jacobs
George Zack
James Haedrich
Walt Spader

City of Westminster Attendees:

JoAnne Price, Westminster Open Space Advisory Board
Randy Tucker, Westminster Open Space Advisory Board
Bob Briggs, Westminster Open Space Advisory Board
Heather Cronenberg, Open Space Manager
Lauren Schevets, Open Space Technician
John Carpenter, Community Development Director

Others in attendance:

Kristan Pritz, Director of Open Space and Trails
Pete Dunlaevy, Open Space and Trails Coordinator
Kevin Standbridge, Assistant City and County Manager
Paul Winkle, Colorado Parks and Wildlife
Kris Middledorf, Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Agenda Minutes

1. Call to Order, Joint Broomfield-Westminster Meeting
2. Introduction of Committee Members and Interested Citizens:

Jaan Raamot

3. Update on Metzger Farm Open Space Construction and Discussion

Master Plan and Construction:

Kristan provided an update on the Metzger Farm construction plans and an overview of the project. The construction documents are about 75% complete and the plan is to have contractors bid on the projects in the first part of 2012. The initial improvements will include amenities like the Dry Creek bridge, overlook, fishing pier, trails, picnic shelter and fencing.

>Paul W.-if the spillway is rebuilt, will the eastern pond be drawn down for any period of time?

>Kristan-the plan is not to draw the pond down through this construction project; we will be looking at the drainage system in the larger Urban Drainage project and the preference is to preserve the look and features that the ponds currently have;

>Paul W.-if the pond were to be drawn down, that would be an opportunity to enhance the pond;

>Randy-if an eagle were to come to the property and nest in this area, what would we do?

>Kristan-we would consult our wildlife biologist and Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW), and develop a plan with them;

>Annette-Boulder Mountain Parks staff would be a good resource for this situation also;

>John C.-there is a bald eagle nest at Standley Lake that has limited the trail possibilities there; we have a trail gap in the nesting area;

>John C.-when will the site be open to the public?

>Kristan-hopefully in the summer, or possibly by late-Spring if all goes as planned;

>Rob-will the property open all at once, or open in phases?

>Kristan-the plan is to do the construction all at once and then open the entire site at the same time, except for the buildings;

>Heather-if and when we work on restoring the buildings, we can then close the homestead area if needed;

>Rob-will there be a caretaker?

>Kristan-the plan is to find a caretaker; we did have a couple living on the property but they moved to a new house; we would like to find another caretaker, but there are some hiring logistics to address;

>Jaan-have observed some foot traffic along 120th in this area, and it seems as though there is not any space for pedestrians there?

>John C.-Westminster is seeking a CDOT grant to widen Federal and 120th in this area, and that project would have 8-10 foot sidewalks included, we are hoping for this money to be available in 2013;

>Kevin-Broomfield will have a similar project on Lowell, which will have sidewalks as well;

>Heather-(outlined the proposed budget for the committees – provided handout)

Fishing at the East Pond:

Paul Winkle, from Colorado Parks and Wildlife, provided a review of the fishing composition and conditions for the eastern pond on the site. In September 2011,

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CPW staff used fish shocking devices and trap nets to take an inventory of the fish in the pond. Paul reported that there were not a lot of larger game fish in the pond, but there were a variety of fish species including carp, small bass, and pumpkin seeds. Paul reported that the depths of the pond were 5-7 feet in the southeastern end, 3-4 feet in the middle areas, and just 1-2 feet in the western end. Paul noted that increased depths would likely lead to better fish composition and that the carp limit the habitat by causing increased turbidity, as they root along the bottom and stir up sediment.

>Randy-what kind of gains would you expect to see with greater depth?

>Paul W.-it really depends on the site, but with more water and habitat you will get more fish; you will also need to manage the composition to get the fish that you want;

>Kevin-the drainage box on Lowell will be expanded soon to prevent flooding to the west; we will then evaluate with all of you how much water is desired within the Metzger property, and we will determine if a bypass is needed for the water;

>Paul W.-there is a possibility of getting a 'Fishing is Fun' grant for this site, which could include deepening the pond, habitat improvement, and shelters on the shore;

>Kristan-are there vegetation improvements we should make?

>Paul W.-not necessarily, as the shoreline is well-suited for fishing currently; one suggestion to improve the habitat would be to take as many common carp out of the pond as possible to improve water clarity; artificial reefs or any kind of cover within casting distance of the dock would also improve the fishing; regulations would help too, at the state or city level (CPW will not enforce city regs); would also recommend catch and release regulations for large mouth bass; the dock location looks acceptable, as you will be able to cast out to the deeper areas;

>Randy-what are the most important issues to address?

>Paul W.-water quality is a big one, and the removal of common carp will help with that;

>Kristan-Broomfield staff is (and will be) monitoring water quality in the pond;

>Paul W.-dissolved oxygen and PH are two of the important things to watch; we could check quality and do another electro-shock composition analysis in May or June if desired; some volunteers (approximately 10) would be needed; another part of the project could be to put some trees stumps into the pond to create additional habitat; the group generally supported the idea of doing this project;

>Rob-what is the timeline for bass recovery?

>Paul W.-if carp were removed; probably by 2013 you would see a difference;

>Kristan-should we be stocking this pond, and would it be a good idea to have events here, like a fishing derby?

>Paul W.-we can do stocking or special event stocking; this is a pretty good location for a special event like that; Trout will not be very well suited for this site and shouldn't be too much competition for other fish if the pond were to be stocked;

>Kristan-what kind of warm water fish would you stock there?

>Paul W.-mainly pumpkin seeds and black bullheads, and then promoting bass;

>Kevin-a good eagle scout project might be the spawning beds or artificial reefs;

>Rob-perhaps a 'friends of Metzger' group could be formed to help with this;

>Kristan-noted that the Broomfield Open Space Foundation and the Westminster volunteer group regularly work at Metzger so there are already two groups focused on this site; these groups could be considered a Friends of Metzger entity or a new sub-group could be created from these two entities. Let's see how things go after the site is opened to see if another separate group is needed.

4. Other Topics as Desired at the Joint Meeting

>Rob-what is the status of the Lexington trail?

>Kristan-the trail between the Lexington Subdivision and the Lambertson Farms subdivision will be built by the Lambertson developers in the next year or two as long as residential development occurs in this Phase of the project. If residential development does not occur, the trail will need to be delayed. A recent revision to the Subdivision Improvement Agreement lays out all of the conditions and a timeline for the trail construction.

John Carpenter provided an update on management (closing road) and acquisition attempts along the north side of McKay Lake, near the intersection of Zuni Street and 144th Avenue.

Heather Cronenberg provided an update on the acquisition of the 'Sisters Property' (30 acres), located south of the Great Western Reservoir Open Space.

Kevin Standbridge provided a brief update on Section 16 and Rocky Flats.

5. Call to Order OSTAC Meeting, 8:00 p.m.

6. Update on Coyote Research and Public Outreach

Kristan described and summarized the conflicts with coyotes in the Anthem Highlands neighborhood and reviewed the public meeting on coyotes at the Broomfield Auditorium on October 24, which was co-sponsored by the CPW and WildEarth Guardians.

>Annette-it would have been nice if more people could have attended the meeting, maybe meetings like this should be held closer to the time of incidents or attacks;

>Kristan-we did have a public meeting in Anthem immediately after one of the attacks. We also did a mailing, CPW staff went door to door to residents, and the HOA staff and HOA web site were very helpful communication venues. The meeting in October was more of an effort to provide information to the general public; Working with CPW and WildEarth Guardians on the meeting was helpful; a video of this meeting will be on the OS and T web site;

Kristan also asked members if it would be feasible to move the January 26 meeting to January 19 so that OSTAC could hear the initial comments from the three wildlife biologists that are coming to Broomfield to review the coyote conflicts in Anthem. The biologists will be here on January 18 and 19. The schedule is tentative so staff will keep OSTAC posted.

Annette suggested the possibility of having a videographer document the process with the coyote experts and their research. Kristan said she would look into this option.

7. Skiing and Sledding on Open Space

Pete reviewed the Open Space matrix of uses in the Open Space, Parks, Recreation, and Trails Plan. Sledding is listed as “may be appropriate” in trail corridors, natural areas, and cultural lands. Staff discussed whether there was a need to designate sledding areas with members and it was determined that this was not necessary at this time. Members asked Pete to contact the citizen who had asked about sledding to share the results of this discussion.

8. Alexx and Michael’s Pond Pump System and Building

Kristan described the plan for a pump station building and associated system to be constructed to improve water quality at Alexx and Michael’s Pond in the Westlake neighborhood. Residents in the area requested improvements to the pond during the public meetings for the Westlake Neighborhood Plan. Kristan showed the committee pictures of the façade of the building and locations for the water system. Kristan also informed the committee of new trail entry signs that were placed around the pond. The new signs have unique addresses on them to potentially assist with emergency response on open space or trail sites.

Annette suggested trying to get an article in the newspaper on the trail entry address signage.

9. Review and Approve Minutes of the September 26, 2011 OSTAC Meeting

Dennis motions for approval; Rob seconds. Minutes approved.

10. Updates and Reminders

-Next OSTAC Meeting on December 1, 2011

-January 19, 2012, proposed OSTAC Meeting – alternate date

-Request to name the Broomfield Trail Adventure after Ralph Johnson:

Kristan also noted that she had received a recent email from Randy Ahrens, former Councilmember and Mayor Pro Tem to consider adding Ralph Johnson’s name to the Broomfield Trail Adventure. Mr. Johnson recently passed and was a long time supporter of open space and trails. He particularly enjoyed working on the trails. Mr. Johnson also served for many years on city council and on OSTAC. Kristan will put this request on the December 1 meeting for members to discuss.

Other as Desired by OSTAC

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

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Minutes Prepared by Pete Dunlaevy

Approved by OSTAC on December 1, 2011.