

**MINUTES AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ADVISORY
COMMITTEE, July 27, 2006**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Christine Quinlan in the Hearing Room of the Board of Commissioners, Third Floor, Boulder County Courthouse, Boulder, Colorado.

POSAC Members in Attendance

Present: Lisa Dilling, Barbara Hawke, Mary McQuiston, Chris Meyer, Janice Moore, Melanie Muckle and Eric Vogelsberg, Christine Quinlan and Dave Robertson

Excused: David Batts and Sean McCoy

Staff in Attendance

Ron Stewart, Jan Burns, Melissa Arnold, Jim Daus, Mel Stonebraker, Tim D'Amato and Jeff Callahan with the Land Use Department

Minutes of June 22, 2006 Meeting

Barbara Hawke moved to accept the June 22, 2006 minutes. *Lisa Dilling* seconded the motion. *Motion carried unanimously.*

Public Participation for Items not on the Agenda

None

Property Transactions:

* *Action Requested- Recommendation to BOCC*

A. Avanti

Staff Presenter: Jim Daus

See staff memo for detail. Purchase of 12.46 acres at the summit of Big Horn Mountain near Gold Hill

Public Comment

- *Gretchen Diefenderfer, 9147 Sunshine Canyon*, said she has lived there since 1966 and believes this is a magical place that people have accessed since Gold Hill was established. She hiked up there with Arapahoe Indians who said the spot was sacred. On behalf of the people at Gold Hill, she urges the committee to recommend the purchase this land despite the high price.
- *John Sand, 620 Main Street, Gold Hill*, said that when Mark Steen put up sale signs for the property west of Avanti (Horse Fall Flats), a group in Gold Hill formed GHOST, Gold Hill Open Space Team, to prevent development and encourage its purchase for open space. They successfully worked with POS to reach this goal. For ~80 years, people have enjoyed this land (he produced a Gold Hill calendar with an old photograph illustrating this point). The price may seem high, but considering what is happening with surrounding real estate, it's reasonable for its protection. He asked that his comments also apply to the Weed property.

Motion

Eric Vogelsberg moved to accept staff recommendation, and requested that the property remain open to the public. *Melanie Muckle* seconded the motion. ***Motion carried unanimously.***

Discussion on Motion by POSAC Members

Melanie Muckle commented that although this property is one of the most expensive mountain properties they have seen, it is beautiful and special. She agrees that the area should remain open to the public, but expressed concern about the open pits and the County's cost in securing those areas. *Jim Daus* said one of those pits is on adjacent open space (Fledderjohn) and is fenced. *Dave Robertson* commented that he was up there yesterday because he was appalled at the price. He commented that if part of the land went to a conservation easement, a house could be built and be hidden in that area. He mentioned that a house and yurt that are already up there. He also noted 5 for sale signs between this property and Jamestown Road and 13 by Bald Mountain, and said that perhaps the flattening of real estate prices is upon us. He asked whether a better price could have been negotiated and whether there was a general management plan for this area. *Ron Stewart* said that when they made the application for the Reclamation and Public Purposes Act with the BLM, their conceptual plan included trails and trailheads in this area. Larissa Reed is looking at the future management direction of this area, which will be a public use area. Under this Act, some public use has to be involved for the BLM to give this land to the County. There is no thought of closing the area, as historical use is usually continued after purchase until a management plan is completed and official trails are built. *Eric Vogelsberg* mentioned the public process they went through with Jeff Moline for this application, and would like to see an update as well as what was presented to the BLM. *Ron Stewart* said nothing absolute came out of that process because there were many variables, but things will become more definite when they actually receive the BLM land. Currently, the BLM is spending its time on the land exchange with the County and will not get to the R&PP until that is settled.

B. Weed

Staff Presenter: Jim Daus

See staff memo for detail. Purchase of 15 acres adjacent to Big Horn Point near Gold Hill

Discussion/Questions by POSAC Members

Following questions about access to this parcel, *Jim Daus* said that a landowner could plausibly obtain it, as the previous owner had engineering plans created and felt it was plausible. *Ron Stewart* added that if an applicant has enough money, they might be able to obtain access in front of Big Horn Point. He said staff feels it's worth removing the possibility of a house on this land.

Public Comment

- *Doug Parker, 8605 Sunshine Canyon*, has a house on Big Horn Mountain. He has been trying to get the top of this mountain preserved as open space for years. He commented that Avanti is the keystone of Big Horn Mountain open space and the

price will only be more expensive in the future. He strongly encouraged the committee to recommend this purchase.

Motion

Dave Robertson moved to accept staff recommendation. *Eric Vogelsberg* seconded the motion. ***Motion carried unanimously.***

Discussion on Motion by POSAC Members

Responding to Mr. Parker's comments, *Christine Quinlan* said they have been working to protect land in that area for years. *Barbara Hawke* commented that she feels more comfortable with the higher prices because there has been some planning framework to see how the area could be appreciated for its open space values and trails. Because of the existence of this framework, she would tip in favor of purchasing more land in the area.

C. Sale of Burchfield Residence

Staff Presenter: Mel Stonebraker

See staff memo for detail. This residence will be sold subject to a conservation easement

Discussion/Questions by POSAC Members

Answering questions, *Mel Stonebraker* confirmed that the house would be sold as is, because to rent it would require the County to invest at least \$30,000 to \$50,000 in repairs.

Public Comment - None

Motion

Chris Meyer moved to accept staff recommendation. *Melanie Muckle* seconded the motion. ***Motion carried unanimously.***

Discussion on Motion by POSAC Members

Melanie Muckle spoke in favor of getting farm tenants onto the properties they farm.

Weed Management Protocol

** Action Requested- Recommendation to BOCC*

Staff Presenter: Tim D'Amato

See staff memo for detail. The BOCC would like to formally approve the County Weed Management Policies and Procedures as a footnote to the Boulder County Weed Management Plan following public review and approval from POSAC.

Public Comment

- *Jim McKee, 1037 Champion Circle, Longmont*, has worked with the County in controlling weeds, and served on the City's integrated pest management task force. He commented that the plan was well reasoned and effective, consistent with available resources and supported by reviewing professionals. He commented that Myrtle Spurge will be continue to be a problem until municipalities enforce eradication within their jurisdictions. Weed

management needs more attention along trails. He is not in favor of biocontrols and hopes insect release for diffuse Knapweed is effective and does not harm the native penstemon. Common Teasel is more serious than noted in the plan and Russian Olive needs more control. Bouncingbet can be found on many roadsides leading into the mountains in Boulder County. Dame's Rocket seeds spread downstream and is highly invasive. Finally, Moth Mullein is not mentioned in the plan, but it could be a serious problem.

- *Dick Schillawski, 1160 N. 119th Street, Lafayette, CO*, commented that he is disappointed with the County's performance on open space that neighbors his land. He said there has been a constant progression of weed species over the years and funds are not being appropriately allocated for weed control. He agrees with Tim D'Amato that the weeds have to be hit when their numbers are small and before they become a larger problem. When the right-of-ways get mowed, he noted that only 2 feet gets mowed and the rest goes wild with weeds. He believes that staff is doing the best they can with the available tools, but until the County gets serious about doing what they say they are going to do, their efforts will be futile.
- *Eric Lane, State Weed Coordinator for the Colorado Department of Agriculture, 700 Kipling St. Suite 4000, Lakewood*, said his comments are in the attachments and thought the plan was well balanced. He commented that Boulder County has many List A Species and appreciated that Tim addressed them individually. He said he has made funds available to the County each year to help deal with Mediterranean Sage. Although the County has been addressing it recently, he is concerned that County residents are not doing everything possible. In a change to the weed law in 2003, local governments are obliged to make sure landowners within their jurisdictions are eradicating List A Species. He encouraged POSAC to recommend the plan and pass along the suggestion that the County needs to not only manage its properties, but also ensure that residents throughout the County are doing everything they should be doing.
- *Kelly Uhing, 365 London Ave., Lafayette*, is the Weed Management Specialist for Adams County and acted as a peer reviewer for this item. She believes it is a very effective addition to the plan, and expressed appreciation for the County's weed management efforts. She urged against putting together a technical advisory committee for Boulder County, as she has heard nothing but frustration from the members of the City of Boulder's committee.

Discussion/Questions by POSAC Members

Melanie Muckle asked why some State B list species are of lower priorities on the Policies and Procedures such as Bouncingbet. She also asked whether it fell into the category of weeds too numerous to eradicate (vs. suppressed or contained), and why Moth Mullen was not listed anywhere in the Policies and Procedures. *Tim D'Amato* said it is extremely difficult to enforce on ornamentals with private landowners, but the County does encourage control of these species. He plans to continue monitoring Bouncingbet, which is possible to contain or suppress, and will keep her concern in mind. He also said Moth Mullen was an oversight on his part and will add it to the list. *Melanie Muckle* encouraged sending photos to landowners to aid in garden weed identification. *Tim D'Amato* said he would work with extension to get weed articles and photos to landowners. *Barbara Hawke* summarized her written comments, stating that perhaps there should be high priority efforts on POS properties with significant natural resource values. Also, people with conservation easements should be utilized as a resource for communication. These motivated neighbors could be gathered together to act beyond their boundary lines. She also suggested combining education and communication efforts between weeds and forest pest and pathogens. *Tim D'Amato* said Janis Whisman, who coordinates the County's conservation

easements, is very enthusiastic to address this issue of weeds with conservation easement landowners. *Chris Meyer* said he supports Barbara's written comments about communicating with conservation easement landowners, and added that the County should use as many resources as possible to coordinate efforts across the county. *Lisa Dilling* seconded the comments about coordination between private landowners and municipalities, and suggested that the County be a leader in a campaign of sorts to make this link. She commented that she supports the revegetation of native species following weed removal. Lastly, she expressed concern about biocontrols and asked about the rigorousness of the testing. *Tim D'Amato* responded that the Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has a very stringent testing policy. *Mary McQuiston* commented that her home is surrounded by City open space and she does not know of any neighbors who have been contacted about noxious weeds. Anything to encourage more action here would be great. *Eric Vogelsberg* commented that because weeds don't pay attention to property boundaries, control/eradication does not work unless the landowners, municipalities and other authorities are all involved. He requested that when this item goes before BOCC, the Commissioners be asked to get the City active with private landowners.

Motion

Chris Meyer moved to accept staff recommendation. *Dave Robertson* seconded the motion. ***Motion carried unanimously.***

Discussion on Motion by POSAC Members

Chris Meyer reiterated that the theme of coordination carry forward. *Dave Roberston* asked that Barbara's comments be attached to the BOCC memo. *Barbara Hawke* commended staff for being praised by peer reviewers and staying in sync with the State's priorities. *Christine Quinlan* said that it would be nice to have the presence of POSAC members at the BOCC hearing to reinforce staff's position and add outside voices to influence the outcome.

Second Motion

Dave Robertson moved that POSAC endorse the comments of Barbara Hawke on the weed management coordination suggestions, and that they be forwarded to BOCC with their hearty recommendation. *Chris Meyer* seconded the motion. ***Motion carried unanimously.***

Niwot Trailhead Final Design Concept

** Action Requested- Recommendation to BOCC*

Presenter: Jeff Callahan, Land Use Department

See staff memo for detail. Staff requested recommendation of the Niwot Trailhead Final Design Concept for the recyclable material drop-off facility to BOCC.

Discussion/Questions by POSAC Members

Answering Questions, *Jeff Callahan* said they could have this project completed before the end of the year, and there will be room for 2-3 cars at a time at the drop-off with 1-2 cars waiting, leaving plenty of room for cars to drive by and park in the lot. *Christine Quinlan* commented that through some means (newsletters) this facility should be promoted and the citizens should be educated as to how fortunate they are to have this drop-off available, as this may avoid abuse of the facility. *Janice Moore* commented that as a general rule, if a local community is involved in the creation of something such as this facility, they are more likely to place more value on it as a

resource and treat it appropriately. *Eric Vogelsberg* commented that the design POSAC looked at last time separated the trail from the parking lot; however, the trail is not grade-separated in this design. He suggested separating it so that trail users who are passing through have a better user experience. *Barbara Hawke* seconded both of Eric's comments. She added that POSAC has spent lots of time discussing this issue, and she would like for everyone to try and get everything right from the beginning.

Public Comment

- *Dirk Arnold, 13609 Gold Hill Road, Boulder*, referring to 2 trees on Map 1, suggested that only one tree be planted because horse trailers would probably unload there. He also mentioned that the little corner at the beginning of the parking area might impede trailers from entering the parking lot.
 - *Jeff Callahan* responded that if a pullout for equestrian parking is built, Parks and Open Space staff would deal with those issues. He said he would address the tree issue with the landscape architect and Land Use.
- *Eric Vogelsberg* spoke on behalf of the *Boulder County Horse Association (BCHA), P.O. Box 19601, Boulder*. BCHA is concerned that the horse parking is a future addition and request that it be made part of the initial design and construction. He added that in May of 2005, POSAC proposed that this be done in one phase, but instead, it is being done in two phases. He said that BCHA once used the trails for equestrian use, but stopped when the original bins went in because there was no room for trailers, and now, the horses are being left out.

Motion

Eric Vogelsberg moved to accept staff recommendation with two modifications: (1) include equestrian parking as a part of the original design and (2) separate the trail from the immediate edge of the parking lot to provide a higher quality trail experience. *Dave Robertson* seconded the motion. ***Motion carried unanimously.***

Discussion on Motion by POSAC Members

Eric Vogelsberg commented that he made this motion because if this whole thing can be done in one phase, it would be best for everyone involved.

Director's Update

Ron Stewart is planning to bring a property transaction either to the retreat on Saturday 7/29 or to a special meeting, which most members agreed they could attend on 8/10. He will provide more details during the executive session on Saturday.

Motion

Chris Meyer moved to authorize an executive session for the purpose of discussing items that are currently under negotiation. *Eric Vogelsberg* seconded the motion. ***Motion carried unanimously.***

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.