

**MINUTES AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ADVISORY
COMMITTEE, February 22, 2007**

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

POSAC Members in Attendance

Present: David Batts, Lisa Dilling, Sean McCoy, Janice Moore, Melanie Muckle, Dave Robertson and Eric Vogelsberg

Excused: Mary McQuiston, Christian Meyer, Christine Quinlan

Staff in Attendance

Melissa Arnold, Claire DeLeo, Therese Glowacki, Vivienne Jannatpour, Susan Spaulding, Ron Stewart, Janis Whisman

January 22, 2007, Meeting Minutes

Dave Robertson moved to accept the January 22, 2007, minutes. Sean McCoy seconded the motion. *Motion carried unanimously.*

Public Participation for Items not on the Agenda

None.

Property Transaction: Girl Scouts

** Action Requested- Recommendation to BOCC*

Staff Presenter: Janis Whisman

See Staff Memo for Detail on Presentation. *40 acres conservation easement adjacent to RMNP*

Discussion

Melanie Muckle asked about the history of the parcel, i.e. how the Girl Scouts acquired the property. Janis Whisman stated that it is her impression that the Girl Scouts have owned the property for quite some time although she is not sure of the details. Melanie Muckle asked if RMNP has a right of first refusal, and Janis replied that RMNP does not, although the National Park Service has expressed interest in purchasing the property. Dave Robertson asked what the County will get out of purchasing a conservation easement on the property that will ultimately be sold to RMNP, i.e. what is the benefit to Boulder County and how easily the National Park Service could acquire the property. Janis Whisman responded that RMNP would first need congressional approval to adjust the boundary of the park and then congressional appropriation of funds to pay the Girl Scouts and Boulder County for their interests in the property. Dave Robertson also inquired about the risks if the conservation easement were not put in place. Janis Whisman answered that the Girl Scouts could sell the property to anyone and the property could be subdivided. With the conservation easement, the County is playing a good partner role in the interim. If RMNP does go through the process to acquire the property, the County will be paid fair market value for the property at the time of the sale. Eric Vogelsberg asked where the remainder of the Girl Scout property is located. It is the 160 acres immediately to the east. Lisa Dilling asked if there is some urgency due to the reorganization of the Girl Scouts. Janis Whisman replied that there are financial issues within the organization, which is

why they cannot donate the conservation easement at this time. The current executive director of the Mountain Prairie Council is concerned about the long-term effects and use of the property.

Public Comment

None.

Motion

Eric Vogelsberg moved to accept the amendment as presented, and Sean McCoy seconded the motion. *Motion carried unanimously.*

Discussion on Motion

Eric Vogelsberg commented that if RMNP buys the property the County will be reimbursed for the cost of the purchase of the CE and Boulder County will protect the property in trust. Sean McCoy concurs. Eric Vogelsberg commented that the habitat value and the contiguity to RMNP make the property valuable.

Conservation Easement Donations Report

**Information Only*

Staff Presenter: Janis Whisman

See Staff Memo for Detail on Presentation.

Discussion

Eric Vogelsberg asked for a copy of the map with the locations of all of the donated conservation easements. Janis Whisman said that she would e-mail a pdf file of the map to all POSAC members. Dave Robertson commented that it might be a good idea for the Boulder County Parks and Open Space Foundation to advertise the possibility for people to donate conservation easements. Melanie Muckle (who is on the board of the foundation) replied that it is a good idea and she will relay the information to the board. She further stated that she was impressed by the quality of the properties as well as the complexity of some of the transactions.

Baseline Vegetation Mapping of Open Space

**Information Only*

Staff Presenter: Claire DeLeo

See Staff Memo for Detail on Presentation. Claire distributed a Memorandum that was not included in the packet.

Discussion

Lisa Dilling asked about the use of aerial photography and ground truthing and if there is a way to use the vegetation maps as a baseline. Claire commented that Parks and Open Space would likely choose specific properties and that mapping with satellite aerial photography has much less detail. Janice Moore commented that if certain areas could be targeted at an earlier successional stage it would be valuable for future management and that you may not learn a lot from the baseline if you are not able to detect changes, for example, certain plant communities change faster than others. David Batts asked if the BLM and the USFS are doing vegetation mapping. Claire replied that she does not think the USFS Arapahoe Roosevelt Ranger District does, but was not sure. David asked if Boulder County applied for a CNHP grant for this

project. Claire commented that Boulder County was awarded a CNHP grant but not for this project, the grant is for rare species and wetland inventory for the entire County not just open space property. Melanie Muckle asked about public accessibility of the data and if the vegetation map can be made available to the public through ArcMap. Claire replied that the information can be put onto the website using general alliances for the plant communities. Melanie Muckle asked if other communities in the County can learn from what the County has done and if the County would be able to assist them. Claire DeLeo replied that the County intentionally chose a standardized system and that Parks and Open Space wants to be able to tie into other agencies information and that the County would be willing to assist other communities in vegetation mapping efforts. Janice Moore commented that the detailed and standardized information is a useful gift to the future. It is difficult to interpret ecological data when Parks and Open Space doesn't know what was there previously. Lisa Dilling commented on statewide databases that are mapping data in the same format, primarily riparian areas and habitat for CDOW using aerial photos. CO-GAP, a Landcover/Vegetation Grid, and CO-MAP, a mapping of ownership parcels of the shortgrass prairie in Colorado, are available to the public.

Director's Update

Ron Stewart

The Vegetation mapping project was funded from the sales tax revenue. Currently 10% is allocated for management and eventually 50% will be allocated for management projects. Some of the management projects funded include grading trailheads and paving entrances in addition to the CNHP inventory.

BCPOS staff OSMP staff and the CDOW have a meeting scheduled to discuss a Mountain Lion behavior study in the urban Front Range interface. There will be a joint meeting in March or April and staff will address POSAC on the issue.

Boulder County is applying for a GOCO grant for the Harney-Lastoka property to develop the community garden and would like an endorsement from POSAC.

Motion

Eric Vogelsberg moved to support the draft letter in support of the GOCO grant for the community garden at the Harney-Lastoka property and Dave Robertson seconded the motion.

Motion carried unanimously

The County applied for and was awarded a \$50,000 grant from the Natural Resource Conservation Service to do restoration work on the south branch of the St. Vrain River on the Gage property. Boulder County was also awarded an \$80,000 grant for improvements on the Grassy Top property currently owned by the BLM. The County has an R&PPA application with the BLM for the property. The improvements will include interpretive signs at the Switzerland Trail Overlook. When the improvements are complete the BLM will patent the land to the County.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.