

**MINUTES AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ADVISORY
COMMITTEE, February 28, 2008**

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, Mary McQuiston, Christian Meyer,
Janice Moore (arrived 6:35), Melanie Muckle.

Excused: Sean McCoy, Christine Quinlan, Jason Vogel.

Staff in Attendance

Jim Daus, Renata Frye, Vivienne Jannatpour, Rich Koopmann, Larissa Read, Ron Stewart, Mel Stonebraker, Ernst Streng, Janis Whisman, Judy Wolfe

January 24 Meeting Minutes

Christian Meyer moved to accept the January 24 minutes with the following addition: Include Melanie Muckle's positive comment regarding the County's efforts at grassland restoration during Therese Glowacki's presentation. Lisa Dilling seconded the motion.

Motion carried unanimously.

Public Participation for Items not on the Agenda

None.

POS Foundation Homesteaders Plaque

**for information only*

POS Foundation Presenters: Rich Koopmann & Scott Bruntjen

There is no staff memo for this item.

The POS Foundation was established in 2005 as a supporting organization for the Boulder County Parks & Open Space Department. The mission of the non-profit POS Foundation is to strengthen the connections between the public and POS by raising private funds, supporting innovative projects, fostering partnerships and increasing community involvement. The Foundation presented a plaque recognizing the Homesteaders, who are their founding members. This plaque will be mounted in the POS building, outside the Prairie Rooms.

Comments

Melanie Muckle voiced her appreciation for the foundation and its work.

Public Comment

None.

Property Transaction: Wetzler

** Action Requested- Recommendation to BOCC*

Conservation Easement over 141.5 acres

East of Ish Reservoir

Staff Presenter: Jim Daus

See Staff Memo for Detail on Presentation.

Questions

Mary McQuiston asked what is the total square footage allowed for outbuildings? Jim Daus answered that 10,000sf total is allowed in two separate locations. Mary McQuiston: Could one of the building rights be on the east side of 115th? Jim Daus: No, only outbuildings would be allowed on the east side. Mary McQuiston: If we didn't purchase the conservation easement, could a house be built on the east side? Jim Daus: If we don't purchase this, there could be houses all over, depending on the approval of Land Use. David Batts asked Jim if he knew what the intent of the outbuildings would be? Jim Daus answered that the purpose would be mainly agricultural. The owner plans to continue leasing the land for agricultural purposes. David Batts asked about the frequency of trains on this track? Janis Whisman responded that trains go through there several times a day. David Batts commented that it doesn't seem very attractive for a residential area to have such an active railway going through. He asked if the land extends all the way to the shoreline? Jim Daus answered that it does go all the way up to the ownership line of the reservoir, but it doesn't go to the shoreline. David Batts: Are there any water rights associated with this property? Jim Daus: No. Mary McQuiston asked if the area to the north of this property is all developed? Jim Daus: The land just adjacent to this property to the north is developed, on two- to five-acre parcels. Melanie Muckle: How are there three building rights but seven TDRs? Jim Daus: Because there are four building rights that translate to eight TDRs, two for one. However, if a house remains on the property, one TDR must remain, so eight TDRs minus one is seven.

Public Comment

None.

Discussion

Mary McQuiston commented that she thinks this is incredibly expensive. Lisa Dilling agreed that it seems very expensive for a conservation easement. Ron Stewart responded that he thinks this is the least expensive for a 35-acre variety we will see. The \$1,350,000 price will be reduced by about \$600,000 by the sale of the TDRs. The staff feels this land is very inexpensive for a 35-acre parcel in unincorporated Boulder County. Buffalo Ranch was purchased for \$1,500,000 to eliminate just one development right. Christian Meyer conceded that at \$9,000/acre it is relatively inexpensive compared to other parcels we've purchased. However, because there are no water rights and with the railroad running through it makes it seem less like an open space property. He was struggling with the mix of good and bad. David Batts commented that he believes that we're not getting true value here. This purchase doesn't feel right to him. Janice Moore asked how this property fits into our open space portfolio? Ron Stewart answered that this part of the county is relatively undeveloped; the whole area is an open space area so it fits in very well. You get a real sense of openness in that area. Regarding the railroad, if you went out to most parts of the property you wouldn't even notice the railroad.

Motion

Janice Moore moved to accept staff recommendation for this purchase. Melanie Muckle seconded (for purposes of having a vote).

Discussion on Motion

Melanie Muckle liked the idea that it is at the northernmost part of the county and it fits in with other parcels, but she felt that it would ultimately be subsidizing “prairie castles.” She is not sure we would be getting value for the deal. Mary McQuiston agrees, 10,000sf of outbuildings plus a 6,500sf house, that’s almost the same as three great big houses. Lisa Dilling countered that 4,500sf above grade isn’t so big compared to what’s out there. Mary McQuiston pointed out that a 2,000sf basement, if it’s a walkout, becomes 6,500 square feet that you see.

Motion failed 2-4 (Lisa Dilling & Janice Moore for; David Batts, Mary McQuiston, Christian Meyer & Melanie Muckle against).

Property Transaction: Dimig

** Action Requested- Recommendation to BOCC*

Conservation Easement over 30.2 acres

At the southeast corner of Hwy 287 & Jasper Road

Staff Presenter: Mel Stonebraker

See Staff Memo for Detail on Presentation.

Questions

David Batts asked about the development threat to this property? Can it be subdivided or annexed? Mel Stonebraker answered that, as it stands now, it could not be subdivided since it is in unincorporated Boulder County and the house sits on 30 acres. The issue is, what would happen if someday Erie wanted to annex across to Hwy 287, which seems likely. Melanie Muckle: So the risk is annexation not subdivision? Mel Stonebraker: If this area was annexed then it could be developed into any number of things.

Public Comment

- Bob Muckle, 1101 Lincoln Ave., Louisville, CO. He urged the board to recommend approval to purchase this conservation easement because he is convinced that Erie will annex it at some point.

Motion

Lisa Dilling moved to accept staff recommendation for the purchase, Janice Moore seconded.

Motion carried unanimously

Discussion on Motion

Lisa Dilling added that she believes there is a large risk of development here and she appreciates the view corridors from Hwy 287. Something we are trying to do here is preserve these views and the agricultural land. Janice Moore is very excited about this opportunity. She added that this corridor has wonderful views and you feel like you are really out in the country. She believes that if we don’t do this, it will be annexed, and later developed, and that whole stretch could be compromised.

2007 Boulder County Parks and Open Space Donations

**Information Only*

Staff Presenter: Janis Whisman

See Staff Memo for Detail on Presentation.

Questions

Melanie Muckle: Regarding the recent conservation easement audits, how do you pick your appraisers? It seems like the quality of the appraiser impacts how you survive the audit. Janis Whisman responded that the landowners hire the appraiser, not BOCO. BOCO does have a list of recommended appraisers we can give to landowners if they ask. Conservation easement appraising is very specialized, so there are only 15-20 appraisers around the state who have that expertise. She thinks the appraisers who have done the questionable appraisals do not have the expertise and they are not doing the appraising around Boulder County. She added that none of the County's easements in question is being audited at the state level. Melanie Muckle asked if POS staff has had to spend much time addressing the audit efforts? Janis Whisman: We have offered to assist some landowners who have been audited. The majority of time our office has spent has been in the development of a database that allowed us to do the reporting that is now required by the state. Christian Meyer commented that it seems like BOCO is very experienced and proactive and anything POS can do to lend your expertise to other up and coming open space programs would be great. Janis Whisman responded that she is leading a working group of local government open space representatives to develop a set of Best Practices for open space programs around the state.

Boulder County Youth Corps Year in Review

**Information Only*

Staff Presenter: Judy Wolfe

See Staff Memo for Detail on Presentation.

Comments

Christian Meyer called it a great program. Lisa Dilling agreed. Mary McQuiston voiced the same and asked if they recruit kids from any schools or agencies? Judy Wolfe answered that she has a huge mailing list of schools, non-profits, libraries and other organizations, so we get our information out to a very diverse crowd. Judy would like to get more girls involved. Last year's program was made up of about 33% girls, she would like to see around 50% girls in the future. Melanie Muckle asked if the slideshow is on the web to get young people's attention? Judy Wolfe responded that the team slideshows are on the web. She added that we don't really have a problem recruiting Corpsmembers, last year we 400 applicants for 155 spots.

Director's Update

Ron Stewart told POSAC that we are planning a celebration party next month for the three members of POSAC who are leaving. It is planned for March 27 at 5:30. *(The date has changed to April 24 at 5:30pm since the recording of these minutes).*

A grant was awarded to POS from the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program, a federal program that pays for half of the price for conservation easements. FRPP has been a significant factor with properties we've previously bought in Weld County. The FRPP had some money

remaining near the end of the federal budget year. POS indicated we could use some of it. We were subsequently awarded a grant for \$1,300,000.

There is a significant part of Longmont north of Hwy 66 (referred to as “Puma 66”) where development has been proposed. The owners contacted us to see if we are interested in purchasing some or all of that land. It is part of the Longmont urbanized area, requiring Longmont’s permission. Longmont city council voted unanimously to allow negotiations to begin in that deal.

POS is planning to hold an executive session to get feedback from POSAC members regarding upcoming acquisition opportunities.

Discussion by POSAC

Some members voiced that, because of spring break, possibly not everyone would be available to attend the party planned for March 27. Ron Stewart said that they would look into seeing if another date could work.

Christian Meyer commented on recently seeing two mature bald eagles on Prince Lake #2, which the County owns. Another time he saw an adult and a juvenile playing tag over the lake.

Melanie Muckle commended POS for its annual awards ceremony that took place in February.

Questions

Lisa Dilling asked if POSAC members missed a public meeting on the Benjamin Property? The members did not receive notices. Ron Stewart responded a public meeting was held yesterday (February 27) and that a second meeting is scheduled for next Monday night (March 3). Vivienne Jannatpour responded that it was an oversight by staff, but that POSAC members would receive notices of future meetings.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:01 p.m.