

**GRAND JUNCTION/MESA COUNTY
RIVERFRONT COMMISSION MEETING
May 16, 1995**

The meeting was called to order at 7:34 P.M.. Those present from the Commission:

Ken Nesbitt	Bill Ela
Brian Mahoney	Lynda Boody
Pat Kennedy	Paul Nelson
Elvis Guin	Carl Zimmerman
Fid Braffett	Jim Baughman
Bennett Boeschstein	Bill Prakken

Also present: Bill Noble, Jerry Moorman, Robert Cron, Dick Fletcher, Joseph Marie, Carlos Sauvage, Joe Stevens, Don Hobbs, Shawn Cooper, Ted Ciavonne and Stephanie Schmid.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: Nesbitt/Prakken to approve the minutes of the April meeting as submitted.

Motion was passed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Brian Mahoney reported that the City has been given a check for \$177,117 to cover the Riverfront Foundation's share of construction expenses for the Blue Heron Trail, Phase II. Included in the May information packets was a recap of the sources and uses of funding for the project. He pointed out that the moneys paid to Ciavonne and Associates for design fees included pass through expenses for engineering, permits and fees to various governmental entities.

Brian encouraged Commission members to attend the City and County area land use master plan meetings during the coming week and to show support for the Riverfront Project.

The Western Colorado Philanthropy Days reception will be held on Wednesday, May 17. Commission members who agreed to attend included Brian Mahoney, Pat Kennedy, Bill Prakken and Fid Braffett.

Motion: Nelson/Boody to authorize the Commission to pay any charges associated with Commission members attending the reception.

Motion was passed.

Dick Fletcher announced that National Trails Day will be celebrated by the dedication of the completed mile and a half of trail at Corn Lake at 11:00 A.M. on Saturday, June 3, 1995. Governor Roy Romer, State Parks Director Laurie Mathews and GOCO Executive Director

Will Shafroth have been invited. There will be a ribbon cutting and a trail walk.

The annual raft trip will be held on Friday, June 16, 1995. The BLM is sponsoring the event, but in the spirit of cooperation, they would like other agencies to provide the beverages and the shuttle transportation back to Corn Lake at the end of the trip. The itinerary planned is from Corn Lake to the Loma boat ramp. A memo will be sent to everyone on the Intergovernmental Committee mailing list.

There has been a request for a project for a group of middle school students on July 14, 1995. If anyone has a suggestion for an activity, the Commission would appreciate having them contact the Riverfront office.

OLD BUSINESS

1995 Survey Report

Brian thanked Dr. Jerry Moorman of Mesa State College for volunteering his talents to design, administer and compile the Commission's 1995 survey. The survey addressed the questions of who uses the trail, what sections of the trail are most used, what are the primary modes of use, do the trails need improvement, should the trail system receive public support, should the irrigation canals in the urban area be connected to the trail system and has the trail system added to the quality of life in the Grand Valley.

There were 175 useable responses out of 2,000 questionnaires distributed which represents a 9% return rate. As an unsolicited questionnaire, Dr. Moorman felt that it was an acceptable rate of return. It was a self administered questionnaire. The sampling technique used is known as a non-probability judgement technique, i.e. not everyone had a chance to participate.

According to the survey, the typical trail user is a married white male or female over the age of 55 who lives in zip codes 81501 or 81506. The Connected Lakes, Audubon and Blue Heron trails appear to get the most usage. Primary uses of the trail include walking and cycling with walking being the number one activity. Forty-seven percent of the respondents thought the trail needed improvement, but the majority thought the need for improvement was slight. Safety was the highest area of concern. Seventy-three of the respondents felt that the trails should receive public support, ninety percent thought that both the City and the County should provide support. The irrigation canal question received a fifty-one percent positive response, but twenty-eight percent did not understand what the question meant, which is indicative of the need for more education in that area. Dr. Moorman suspects that many new residents are not fully aware of the network of irrigation canals and their importance to the valley. Ninety-two percent of the respondents indicated that they felt that the trails are a valuable amenity to the valley. The mean of these responses fell

somewhere between the very valuable and extremely valuable choice. This information should be very useful in recruiting support the trail system.

The comments section provided insight into the respondents, but should not be weighted too heavily because they represent only one or two individuals rather than a majority. If there was a trend, however, it appeared to be a dichotomy between the walkers and bikers. Seventy individuals provided their names and addresses to receive more information about the trail system. One individual, a Katie Steele of Monument Village expressed concern over the possibility of future trails in her area. Dr. Moorman suggested that she receive a personal response to answer her concerns. He also suggested that the comments possibly be used to trigger further research or investigation.

He encouraged the Commission to replicate the research again next year with the recommendation for future surveys that they be funded so that a broader distribution can be done. The first survey of this sort should be used to iron out the kinks for future efforts and this survey should be used in conjunction with the 1994 intercept survey to validate each other because the demographics are very similar. He warned that the survey should not be used as a reason not to do something. It should be regarded as a piece of preliminary research.

Brian suggested that several Commission members get together to prepare a summary of the survey to be used for educational and promotional purposes. He asked Pat Kennedy, Ken Nesbitt and Carl Zimmerman to join him to work on the summary in the next couple of weeks. Dr. Moorman suggested that the summation be inserted as an appendix to grant applications.

Bio-diversity Training

Lynda Boody has sent out a letter soliciting local interest in a one day workshop on the subject of bio-diversity and ecosystem management in Mesa County. At a recent meeting, she and several other intergovernmental representatives determined that the project was worthwhile and should include local, state and federal government representatives as well as local developers. Lynda has confirmed that instructors are available and has suggested a date around the first of November.

Her hope is that the Riverfront Commission, as the instigator of the intergovernmental meetings, would be interested in sponsoring the seminar. Participating agencies would be polled to see how many of their staff members would be willing to attend. Tuition would range from \$50 to \$90 for the day with the goal of having the tuition revenues cover the cost of the seminar. With the suggestion that the college be contacted to see if they would be interested in sponsoring the workshop, the Commission concluded that they support the concept and encouraged Lynda to go ahead with developing her plan.

Confluence Point

Dean Van Gundy has contacted Brian concerning his interest in selling both the Confluence Point property and the Van Gundy property adjacent to 5th Street. Brian promised to continue to work on the acquisition of Confluence Point after his retirement from the Commission.

NEW BUSINESS

New Commission Officers

Outgoing Co-Chair, Brian Mahoney made the recommendation that the new Co-Chairs, replacing himself and Bill Ela, be Bill Prakken and Paul Nelson.

Motion: Nesbitt/P. Kennedy to approve the appointment of Bill Prakken and Paul Nelson to the positions of co-chair to be effective as of July 1, 1995.

Motion was passed.

July Meeting

An informal get together with a barbecue has been proposed for the July Riverfront Commission meeting. The change in venue and format is intended to recognize the retirement of the last two original members of the Riverfront Commission. Former Commission members and the spouses of all past and present Commission members will be invited. An earlier meeting time was suggested as well as the possibility of having it at the Ela home on F Road or at the United Hunting Club on 18 Road. More information will be available at the June meeting.

Fruita Riverfront Plan

Bennett Boeschstein brought the Commission up to date on the progress of the Fruita riverfront plan which will be unveiled on May 30 at the Fruita City Hall at 7:00 P.M.. Commission members were urged to attend and to participate in the public comment.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

New Trails

Urban Trails

Pat Kennedy informed the Commission that the Urban Trails Committee has appointed three ex-officio members; Jim Grisier with Grand Valley Irrigation, Russ Storbo with the Bureau of Reclamation and Shawn Cooper with City Parks and Recreation. Sue Nall visited the meeting to seek the Committee's support for the development of a trial right-of-way through what she called Westlake Park. The response was that because that area is not on the City's priority list for park development, the Committee could not take action at

this time, but the area may be of interest in the future. The agenda for the June meeting will feature a consultation with Bennett Boeschstein regarding prioritization of City bike routes for signing and striping. Pat also informed the Commission that one of their members, Joseph Van Vliet, had passed away in April and that they were in the process of finding a replacement for him.

Old Spanish Trail

The County has adopted the Gunnison River Bluffs Plan as part to their County Master Plan, which means that we can go ahead with our plans for the Gunnison River Bluffs/Old Spanish Trail.

Carlos Sauvage asked the Commission if they would be interested in applying for GOCO funding for the purchase of approximately 200 acres which contain almost a mile of the Gunnison River for \$150 per acre. According to Carlos, the County is interested in purchasing the property, but feels uncomfortable about doing without a demonstration of public support. The County would hold title to the land and would manage it as open space. The consensus of the Commission was that it would take too long to wait for the funding process with GOCO and that if the County would not act, the Riverfront Foundation should be approached for the money to buy the land.

Orchard Mesa Bridge

Carl Zimmerman has been working with Mark Relph on the landing point for the bridge on the north side of the river. The technical advisory committee for the bridge will meet on May 25 at the Orchard Mesa Middle School. Mark is very concerned about the cost of accessing the bridge on the south side of the river. Carl has had an intern of Jon Schler's prepare a conceptual drawing of the bridge to be used for presentations for fund raising purposes. He also recommended that the Mesa Mutual lateral might offer another canal bank trail opportunity to be developed in conjunction with the Orchard Mesa bridge. Brian suggested that it might be time to start having regular meetings of the Orchard Mesa Bridge committee. Keeping the School District informed was also determined to be paramount.

Watson Island Trail Extension

Don Hobbs has talked with Ted Ciavonne on how best to use the \$30,000 from GOCO toward construction of the Watson Island Trail extension. Due to the pending changes in the levee design and the continued presence of commingled wastes, Ted has recommended that the City wait until the spring of 1996 to begin construction on the trail. Because the project was only partially funded, additional moneys will have to be budgeted and/or funds will have to be raised to pay for the completion of the trail. The three items that are up in the air, at this time, are what the Corps of Engineers will do, when the commingled waste will be removed and the need for the acquisition of additional right-of-way which will determine the parking lot location and trail alignment in relation to the

Botanical Society facility.

Bill Noble with the Botanical Society related the Society's concern about the trail alignment adjacent to their composting facility and the hazard of speeding cyclists conflicting with walkers. The Society is working with Ted Ciavonne and Ed Chamberlain to resolve this problem.

Bill Prakken asked if there was any possibility of working with the levee contractor to coordinate trail and levee construction. Don Hobbs' answer was no. Joe Stevens added that they are at the mercy of agencies over whom they have no control. Brian suggested that a Commission member be assigned to the Watson Island project as soon as the new Commission membership is established.

Trail Operations

Trail Monitor Reports

Nothing to report.

Administration

Financial Report

The financial statements brought no questions or comments. Brian stated that he would write a letter to the City Council asking that the Riverfront Commission continue to be funded in the City's 1996-1997 budget.

Trails Map

Nothing to report.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Braffett/Kennedy to adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 P.M.