

**GRAND JUNCTION/MESA COUNTY  
RIVERFRONT COMMISSION MEETING  
August 15, 1995**

The meeting was called to order at 7:37 P.M. at the Commission's new meeting place, the conference room at the C.D. Smith Building by Co-Chair Paul Nelson. Those present from the Commission:

Ken Nesbitt	Lynda Boody
Judy Kennedy	Fid Braffett
Pat Kennedy	Paul Nelson
Elvis Guin	Lenna Watson
Jim Baughman	Carl Zimmerman
Lynn James	Kirk Rider
Connie Bennett	Lynda Boody
Kathy Hall	Bennett Boeschenstein

Also present: Kathy Portner, Janet Hollingsworth, Laura Farnsworth, Carlos Sauvage, Joe Stevens, Bill Noble, Dick Proctor, Shawn Cooper, Brian Mahoney, Craig Glogowski

**Introduction of New Commission Members**

Paul introduced new Commission members, Kirk Rider, Lenna Watson and Connie Bennett and asked them to share their feelings on why they wanted to be a part of the Riverfront project. He also asked other individuals in attendance to introduce themselves to the group.

**Approval of Minutes**

Motion: Nesbitt/Boody to approve the minutes of the July meeting.

Motion was passed.

**Announcements**

Paul encouraged all Commission members to plan to attend the GOCO event that is tentatively planned for the evening of Wednesday, September 13 in Fruita. Stephanie will notify the Commission as soon as she has the details.

The City Council working dinner on September 27 is also very important for Commission members to attend. It was noted that one of the outcomes of last year's dinner was the establishment of the Urban Trails Committee.

The Riverfront Run is scheduled for October 7, 1995 and will be held again at Connected Lakes State Park.

## **Old Business**

### **Watson Island Update**

Joe Stevens reported that because of the high water this spring, there was a loss of several hundred feet of trail on Watson Island. Preliminary estimates reveal that the repairs will cost in the neighborhood of \$90,000 if it is to be restored to its original condition. Parks and Recreation will attempt to develop several different alternatives which will be brought to the City Council and the Commission for evaluation. He suggested that a crusher fines paving surface may be considered as one of the alternatives in light of the fact that this kind of flooding may occur again.

### **Colorado River State Park Update**

No one from State Parks was present at the meeting. Joe Stevens asked if some Commission members would be willing to meet with members of the Parks Advisory Board, Jim Robb and someone from the State Health Department to discuss where to go from here with regard to the Climax Mill tailings site. Paul asked for volunteers for this meeting. Barbara Creasman with the D.D.A. asked to be included. Paul suggested that one of the two Commission co-chairs be included and Ken Nesbitt and Carl Zimmerman agreed to participate.

Stephanie informed the Commission that the County Planning Department had sent a copy of a zone change request submitted by United Companies for a property located at 22 Road and River Road. She sent a copy of the request to Dave Giger at State Parks requesting comment because Kurt Mill had indicated that they would pursue acquisition of right-of-way along the river trail corridor that will connect Fruita and Grand Junction. She said that there had been no response from State Parks and that they had indicated that they hadn't given much thought to the matter. Ken Nesbitt told the group that he had made a commitment to provide right-of-way through the property in the event that rights-of-way are acquired from the adjoining property owners.

### **Gunnison River Bluffs Land Purchase**

Carlos Sauvage, at the request of County Land Fill Manager Bob Edminston, asked the Commission to send a letter of support to the County Commissioners, encouraging them to approve the purchase of 50 acres of land adjacent to the land fill. The property is also adjacent to the Gunnison River and has been budgeted for purchase, but the matter was tabled when first brought before the Commissioners.

Motion: Nesbitt/Watson to draft a letter of support for the purchase of the Barber property on the Gunnison River.

Motion was passed.

## **New Business**

### **Jarvis Property/UMTRA Update**

Paul Nelson reported on his trip to Denver to attend a meeting of a State legislative oversight committee dealing with the future of the UMTRA program. Also in attendance were Linda Afman, Doralynn Genova, Dan Wilson and Craig Glogowski of Senator Hank Brown's office. Funding for UMTRA is scheduled to sunset at the end of fiscal 1996 and the City is concerned that all of the clean up will not be completed by that date. They are also very anxious to keep the Chaney disposal site open on a periodic basis so that tailings removed from utility trenches can be disposed of. There is some concern that if the site is kept open, we will be forced to accept hazardous waste from other states and this is not welcomed by the County.

### **Mesa Countywide Land Use Steering Committee**

Copies of the Riverfront Commission's response to the County Land Use Steering Committee's query of parks and recreation interests were included in this month's meeting packets for members' information. Stephanie presented the Commission's response at the Steering Committee's meeting on August 8th.

She related to the Commission the City's concerns, as expressed by Shawn Cooper, regarding the need to for County subdivisions to dedicate open space as a part of their approval process and the importance of working closely with the school district in locating recreation facilities/trails and school sites.

She told the Commission that she suggested to the Steering Committee that the plan include the identification of future trail corridors in addition to the Colorado River corridor and that the opportunity to comment on subdivision and zone change activity adjacent to those corridors be extended to the Commission.

She also reported that Doralynn offered the Riverfront Commission the opportunity to have a representative on the Land Use Steering Committee. The consensus of the Commission is that they would like to be represented and the recommendation was that Bob Cron, a member of the Urban Trails Committee be the Commission's choice. The nomination was tabled until Bob, who was out of town, could be contacted to see if he would be willing to accept the post.

### **Club 20 Trail Linkages Project**

Shawn Cooper, who attended the Club 20 meeting in Montrose, explained that the goal of this project is to coordinate an entire trail system across the western slope. The plan, at this point, is to identify and map all western slope trails and then distill this information into a cohesive network of trails or potential trails that can connect communities. They are looking for a master plan of trails that can be taken to GOCO for funding.

Stephanie, who also attended the meeting, said that she learned that both Delta and Montrose use a portion of their lodging tax to finance the production of their trail maps. The question of whether or not there is a constituency that will use these trails was raised by individuals attending the meeting. There was concern that future marketing, which comprises a later phase of this project, be appropriate for all regions. There was support for emphasizing the shoulder season rather than the peak summer tourist season. The apparent lack of support from CDOT was a common theme for people attending the meeting.

#### **Coordination of Riverfront Fund Raising Efforts**

Paul Nelson explained to the Commission that a need has developed to coordinate Riverfront fund raising efforts and that he and Bill Prakken would like to have fund raising activities cleared with the office and the co-chairs. Carl suggested that the Commission set some priorities as to where they are going.

Kathy Portner, of the City's Community Development Department, emphasized the importance of setting priorities and mapping out fund raising strategies. She said that in the past, Riverfront Foundation members did the legwork to determine which funding sources should be approached and how much money should be requested from the respective foundations. There is a need for one coordinator according to Kathy.

Fid Braffett suggested that in the future, all grant requests be signed by one of the co-chairs. Paul asked who should be responsible for the prioritization of Riverfront projects, the Riverfront Commission or the Foundation. Brian Mahoney, as president of the Foundation, asked that the Commission take the responsibility for ranking projects for importance. It is apparent that coordination of the group's fund raising efforts needs to be reestablished.

With the issue of a deadline of September 30, 1996 for the completion of construction of the Orchard Mesa bicycle/pedestrian bridge, Ken Nesbitt stated that it should take the first priority. Although there is a possibility of a six-month extension of the ISTEA grant, construction of the bridge must be coordinated with low water levels in the river. Jeff Deckler with the State Health Department in Denver has assured Paul that they are willing to work out an easement agreement for the bridge footprint on the north side of the river.

**Motion:** Nesbitt/Braffett to make the Orchard Mesa bicycle/pedestrian bridge the number one priority of the Riverfront Commission and all funding efforts by the Commission/Foundation should be for that project.

In discussion of the motion, Brian Mahoney asked for clarification of the "all". It was determined that what was meant was that the bridge was the number one priority and the motion was not intended

to exclude grant requests for other projects to appropriate sources that didn't compete with the bridge. It was, however, agreed that Ken's intent, in making the motion, was to pull the control of the grant applications in a lot closer to the Commission in order to avoid compromising a \$500,000 project.

Motion was passed.

Paul restated his resolve to take the issue of fund raising coordination up with Bill Prakken because there is the potential for more conflicts of interest over projects and it is important to have the group and not individuals making decisions on project priorities and funding.

#### **Mesa County Lottery Funds Request**

Stephanie informed the Commission that Mesa County Lottery Fund applications are due September 1st. Commission requests over the last two years have been in the neighborhood of \$2,000. She asked the Commission if they would like to continue in the same vein, or, in light of the foregoing motion and discussion, if they would like to ask for money for the bridge.

Motion: Braffett/Zimmerman to make the County Lottery request for as much as possible as long as it is consistent with the dollars that will be available.

Motion was passed.

#### **Committee Reports**

##### Urban Trails Committee

Pat Kennedy reported that new Committee members Laura Farnsworth and Lenna Watson were introduced at the last UTC meeting. Mark Relph joined the Committee to discuss signage and striping options for bike lanes and bike routes around the City. Pat then explained the difference between the two to the Commission. The Committee decided to stay with the international signage for cycling traffic. Mark also brought members of the Committee up to date on the local projects that are being funded by ISTEA including the Horizon Drive Trail, the Orchard Mesa Bridge and the current sidewalk, curb and gutter project along State Highway 340.

Russ Storbo reported that the Bureau of Reclamation cost sharing grant is very close to being an actuality. They are waiting on the formality of approval by the City Council before signing the agreement. The funding will consist of \$10,000 from the B.O.R., \$5,000 from the City and \$5,000 from the County in cash or in-kind services. There are also additional funds that will be available on a cost sharing basis for construction if the feasibility study proves to be favorable. B.O.R. will provide up to \$250,000 for the purpose of constructing trails along the canal banks.

Russ also informed the Committee that he was planning a trip to Phoenix that would include representatives from the Urban Trails Committee or Riverfront Commission, City Parks and Recreation, Grand Valley Water Users Association and the Bureau of Reclamation. The purpose of the trip is to explore the successes that have been realized in the Phoenix area with canal trails. The timing for this trip is around the 6th to the 9th of November. The cost of the trip will be covered by the Bureau of Reclamation.

The subdivision trails subcommittee of the UTC reported on an open space opportunity in the Paradise Hills subdivision which has the possibility of linking the potential of the Highline Canal on the east to the future park site at 26 1/2 Road on the west. The homeowners requested that the open space right-of-way be vacated, but the planning commission denied the request. Pat pointed out that this was an example of the Urban Trails Committee building momentum in establishing an urban trails network.

Pat responded to a question from Brian about the Committee's stance on the uncooperative attitudes of the ditch companies with the observation that the past success of the Riverfront Commission has been based on avoiding conflict and taking a non-confrontational approach. He said that the UTC did not wish to polarize the issues concerning the possibility of canal bank trails. The Committee intends to work with the land owners and other entities and use the same concepts that the Riverfront Commission has used in the last eight years to gain success.

#### **Old Spanish Trail**

Judy Kennedy stated that her goal for this year is to establish the trail across the two pieces of private property. The Riverfront Foundation has given her enough money to accomplish this with the additional donation of fencing, paving materials and labor from the BLM. She added that funds are still needed for signs to direct trail users to the trailhead. It was suggested that the Public Works department be contacted to see if they could manufacture the signs for the trail.

#### **Orchard Mesa Bridge**

Carl informed the Commission that the City is providing a great deal of support for the project. He has also been promised by the State Health Department that a letter will be forthcoming that assures an easement will be granted on the north side of the river to allow the bridge to be constructed. He also felt the Nuclear Regulatory Commission would not have problems with the ground water in the area if the proper procedures were observed. The Public Works Department has sent out an RFP for the design of the bridge, but nothing more can be done until funding is available at the start of FY96.

#### **Trail Operations**

Jim Baughman related that Janet Terry is concerned about bicyclists riding off the pavement on the trail and damaging the landscape along the trail. Commission members echoed that concern about several areas along the trails. Paul recommended that a new safety committee chairman could help address this problem with the establishment of some rules and regulations.

Elvis Guin brought photographs of the damage that has occurred along the Palisade Trail. He expressed concern that the trail might become a safety hazard and he fears that it might be closed to avoid liability issues. The Town apparently still doesn't understand that the trail maintenance is their responsibility. Elvis argues that, even though isolated from the rest of the Riverfront Trail, Palisade's section gets used by many seniors and young people. He is anxious to meet the new Palisade Town Administrator and invite him to a Riverfront Commission meeting.

Fid Braffett set the standard for all time for trail monitor reports with a video report on the damage at Watson Island. For those who had not been on the island since the high water, it was an eye opener to see the extent of the damage.

#### **Administration**

#### **Financial Report**

Paul reviewed the monthly financial report with Stephanie prior to the meeting. He felt that the Commission is on target with their budget and that there were no problems. Brian asked that a letter be sent to Ron Lappi confirming the inclusion of the Riverfront Commission in the City's 96-97 budget at the same amount as in the past. Paul agreed to see that was done. He added that at some point, the Commission was going to need and upgraded computer system and that they might be coming to the Council with a request for funding. There were no questions about the financial statements.

#### **Trail Map**

Stephanie reported that there should be proofs of the new trail map by the end of the week. She added that after discussion with several people concerning the consideration of visually challenged trail users, the color scheme should be changed from blue and green to red and green making the symbols easier to distinguish.

She suggested that perhaps the Riverfront Commission had exhausted City Market's generosity, patience and printing capacities with the 1995 reprinting of the trail map. City Market has been more than generous with its contribution to the cause, but as the trail system grows, it is going to be more and more difficult to do a credible trail map without paying for more sophisticated design and printing. She has talked with Joe Crocker about the possibility of including a request on the MPO's 1997 work plan for \$10,000 for a new and improved trail map. The other possible source of funding

would be a portion of the VCB's lodging tax to fund production and/or reprinting of the trail maps.

#### Annual Report

According to Brian, the 1995 Annual Report is still in process. Stephanie proposed to supply Commission members with copies of the first (1988) Annual Report at the next meeting. Because none of the current Commission members were a part of the Commission when it was written, she felt that it would make for interesting reading.

#### **Public Comment**

Commissioner Kathy Hall expressed her concern about the need for coordination within the County of funding requests from GOCO. She sees the importance of putting together good requests that are prioritized before they reach GOCO. She felt that it is important to respond to every opportunity.

#### **Adjournment**

Motion: Boody/J. Kennedy to adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:52 P.M.