

**GRAND JUNCTION/MESA COUNTY
RIVERFRONT COMMISSION**

MINUTES

JULY 16, 1996

The meeting of the Grand Junction/Mesa County Riverfront Commission was called to order at 7:37 P.M. by Co-Chair Bill Prakken. Those in attendance from the Commission:

Paul Nelson	Fid Braffett
Bill Prakken	Carl Zimmerman
Lynda Boody	Pat Kennedy
Lenna Watson	Kirk Rider
Judy Kennedy	

Also present were: Wade Haerle, Kurt Mill, Bob Cron, Janet Hollingsworth, Greg Taylor, Jody Kliska, Elvis Guin, Joe Stevens, Mike Denton and Stephanie Schmid.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: Rider/Nelson to approve the minutes of the May and June meetings as submitted and amended per Pat Kennedy.

AWARDS

Elvis Guin, former Ex-Officio member of the Commission from Palisade presented the Commission with a letter addressed to the Town of Palisade and the Riverfront Commission thanking them for the privilege of allowing him to be a participant on the Riverfront Commission. He was in turn presented with the Commission's traditional symbol of appreciation for service to the Riverfront Project, a sculpted river rock. Elvis was informed that his service to the Commission was not at an end because he has been appointed as the Commission's official Ambassador Without Portfolio to serve as a representative of the Commission.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Reappointment of Commission members Pat Kennedy, Lynda Boody and Connie Bennett has been approved by both the Grand Junction City Council and the Mesa County Commissioners. Each has been appointed for a three year term. Bill Prakken informed the Commission that there had been a number of highly qualified applicants for the Commission, but, because there were no vacancies per se, Council had decided to reappoint without interviewing other applicants. Bill hoped that some of these applicants could be induced to become members of the Colorado Riverfront Foundation Board of Directors thus preventing their talents from being lost to the cause. There is also the possibility that the Commission could be expanded at some future point which would create new openings for these people.

Bill also informed the Commission that he had written letters to Mark Achen and Bob Jasper concerning Palisade and Fruita's interest in playing a more direct role in the Riverfront Commission as far as participating in selection of Commission members and providing financial support for the Commission's operations. He hoped that the Commission would welcome their participation. He recommended that the possibility of an expanded role for the Commission should be a topic for serious discussion at the annual retreat in January.

The State Trails Symposium is scheduled for Thursday through Saturday, September 5th - 7th in Breckenridge. Commission members and others are encouraged to contact Stephanie if they would like more information or are interested in attending.

Jody Kliska, with the City's Public Works Department, passed around applications for the Walkable Communities and Bicycle Facilities workshops to be held in September. The Urban Trails Committee, along with the City of Grand Junction is sponsoring the workshops which will be put on by presenter Dan Burden of the Florida Department of Transportation. Workshop topics will include the creating of walkable spaces, bicycle transportation, safety issues and case studies of bicycle and pedestrian issues. Reservations for the workshops can be made by contacting Michael Drollinger at 244-1439.

OLD BUSINESS

Club 20 Missing Links Update

Wade Haerle with Club 20 explained that the Riverfront Trails System is included in two of Club 20's geographic regions. Mesa County is a part of both the I-70 corridor study area and the Highway 50 corridor study area. Wade asked Commission members to review the draft of the Mesa County section of the report for errors and omissions. The missing links identified for the I-70 corridor included the section of riverfront trail from Fruita to the Kokopelli Trail, from Fruita to Grand Junction, from Grand Junction to Corn Lake and from Corn Lake to Island Acres State Park, the Town of DeBeque and ultimately the connection to Garfield County. Connecting the Orchard Mesa Bicycle/Pedestrian bridge to the Old Spanish Trail and the Grand Mesa Slopes trails was mentioned in the report. Interest was also expressed in connecting Mesa County and Delta County via a trail either along the Gunnison River or Highway 50. Wade also briefly outlined the highlights of the Colorado State Trails Plan for the western slope.

Future participation by Club 20 in the trails development process could include their efforts to get more trails money to the western slope, being responsible for holding public forums for trails discussion and planning helping to coordinate linkages between counties and municipalities. Bill Prakken thanked Wade for taking the time to update Commission members and encouraged him to return with future updates

Brach's Shopping Center Update

Paul Nelson reprised the problems of the trailhead at the Audubon Trail just west of the Brach's Shopping Center. The site is private property belonging to Louis Brach who is concerned about some of the activities going on the area. Paul has volunteered to assemble representatives of all the public and private interests to discuss the problems and possible solutions. He has had difficulty in arranging a meeting time that is convenient for all because of vacations, but he will continue to work to get people together to talk. Bill and Paul are both concerned that if the situation is not resolved, the public will lose the right to use the Brach property to access the trail.

NEW BUSINESS

Donation to Botanical Society

Because the Great Outdoors Colorado Board of Trustees refused to fund the Botanical Society's request in the Legacy grant application and because a November deadline is looming for matching funds on other grants received by them, the Riverfront Foundation at its quarterly meeting in July voted to give the Society \$5,000 as a show of support for their efforts and recognition of the project's importance to the Riverfront Project. It was agreed that this donation would be contingent on approval by the Riverfront Commission.

Motion: P. Kennedy/Boody to approve the Foundation's donation to the Botanical Society of Western Colorado in the amount of \$5,000 in show of support of their fund raising efforts.

Discussion as to whether or not there should be any conditions on the use of the money insued, but it was agreed that the funds were intended to boost their fundraising efforts and not for a specific purpose. Commission members suggested that the gift to the Botanical Society be publicized to encourage others to follow suit.

Motion was passed.

Pennell Property

The owner of the Auto Court located by the 5th Street bridge has approached the Commission about purchasing his property. The appraisal provided by the owner states that the highest and best use is park land and the asking price is \$280,000 for one acre of land. He offered to donate the cost of clearing the property and to lower the price to \$200,000 for the Riverfront Project. The consensus of the people who looked at the property was that it was a choice piece of ground for future inclusion in the trails system, but the Foundation does not have the funds to make a purchase of that size at this time. Bill Prakken recommended that its possibilities be kept in mind for the future.

North/South Corridor Study

Paul Nelson explained that a study was done 15 years ago that indicated 29 Road would be the best choice for a new north/south corridor across the Grand Valley. He expressed concern that one of the alternatives described by the current study proposes a bridge immediately adjacent to the Orchard Mesa Bicycle/Pedestrian Bridge. He asked whether or not the Commission would be interested in expressing their feelings about the location of the proposed bridge. After discussing the alternatives offered by the consultant, the Commission agreed to draft a letter expressing support for a bridge location that will not conflict with the Orchard Mesa Bicycle/Pedestrian Bridge.

Motion: Zimmerman/J. Kennedy to send a letter to the City and County with a copy to MK Consulting stating that the Commission prefers the new north/south crossing be located away from the bicycle/pedestrian bridge and the new park on Orchard Mesa.

Motion was passed. Bill Prakken will draft the letter.

Ball Property

Owners of property at intersection of 38 Road and Highway 6 & 24 just east of Palisade have approached the Riverfront Commission about donating this property to the Riverfront Project. No determination has been made at this time.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Orchard Mesa Bridge

Mike Denton, the engineering consultant on the bridge was present at the meeting to report on his progress. The 404 permit application has been submitted and is awaiting comment from the US Fish and Wildlife Service. He feels that the bids will be able to be requested within two months. The path on the south bank may be started before the bridge because it is not dependent on flow in the river, but it may be better to bid both phases at the same time in order to have more control over the cost. Bill Prakken was concerned about how much trail on the north bank would be included with the bridge construction. The trail will extend to the rendering plant on the north according to Denton. The trail on the south bank will be graded and road

based but may not be paved until after the bridge construction is complete in order to avoid damage to the trail by the construction equipment.

Gunnison River Boat Takeout

Kirk Rider reviewed the land ownership of the boat take out site. Redlands Water and Power owns the property but does not have a need for it. The BLM owns the land on which the Redlands caretaker's house is located. The hope is that a swap can be made that will make everyone happy. The take out site needs some improvement in terms of a ramp and pull in area. Because this project has been given a high priority by the Legacy steering committee, Kirk suggested some sort of lease arrangement be made with the Redlands Power Company to get permission to proceed with the project while they still own the property. Kirk is waiting for more specific cost estimates for the takeout construction before going any farther.

Urban Trails Committee

Pat Kennedy reported the Committee's progress on the Colinas del Valle area. Open houses have been tentatively scheduled for July 30 and August 31 for landowners and neighbors to offer their comments on the project. A location for the meetings has not yet been set. Letters of support will be sought.

Bob Cron is currently preparing the draft of the Canal Trails Feasibility Study which will be presented at an open house at Two Rivers Convention Center on August 6 from 3:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M.. Public participation in the form of letters is as well as attendance at the open house is encouraged.

The issue of the Tabeguache Trail access has been discussed along with the possibility of the City taking over the BLM lease of the area from the County. The BLM, according to Lynda Boody, would prefer that the County continue to hold the lease until another management plan has been developed. It is her hope that the Bang's Canyon ad hoc committee recommendations will be the basis for that plan.

The July meeting of the Urban Trails Committee saw the introduction of new Committee member, Mike Heaston. Mark Relph presented the city-wide trails map at that meeting which, with a few revisions, will be presented to the City Council as the basis for an Urban Trails master plan. Cliff Davidson, manager of the MPO also attended that meeting to make a presentation. The issue of a possible underpass under Broadway at the Ridges entrance was discussed. The Urban Trails Committee felt that it would be a critical link between the Tabeguache and Colinas del Valle areas and the existing riverfront trails. A letter in support of this underpass has been sent to the City and the County by the Committee.

Legacy Update

Bob Cron reported that the revised Legacy grant has been agreed upon by steering committee members, and that he plans to submit the final plan by August 1. The master agreement with Great Outdoors Colorado, which has not yet been received, will need to be signed by early September.

Safety Committee

Lenna Watson informed the Commission that the videotaping of the trial has been completed and that the tapes are being passed around to the various agencies for them to view the hazards pointed out by the Committee. She said that they would like to obtain air photos of the trails in order to better pinpoint the sections that most need attention. She also expressed concern that there had been no response from the Town of Palisade in regard to participating on the safety committee.

ADMINISTRATION

Financial Report

Fid Braffett reported that revenues are on line as far as the City and the Foundation are concerned. The budgeted item of revenues from other municipalities is a fairly soft item than has not yet materialized. He did feel that there was enough money remaining from prior years to cover any shortages.

Speakers Bureau

Commission member Judy Kennedy, who has served as a one person speakers bureau for quite some time, has opened her own business and will no longer be available during the day to make appearances for the Commission and Foundation. Volunteers were asked to step forward to carry on the tradition of public relations for the Riverfront Commission.

Riverfront Run Committee

Stephanie asked for volunteers to serve on the organizational committee for the Riverfront Run which will be held on October 5th.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Janet Hollingsworth asked about the proliferation of memorial trees at the Junior Service League Park site. Stephanie said that she would check with Mike Vendegna, the City Forester, about the problem.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:27P.M..