

**GRAND JUNCTION/MESA COUNTY
RIVERFRONT COMMISSION**

MINUTES

November 19, 1996

The meeting of the Grand Junction/Mesa County Riverfront Commission was called to order at 7:33 P.M. by Co-Chair Bill Prakken. Those in attendance from the Commission:

Paul Nelson	Pat Kennedy
Bill Prakken	Judy Kennedy
Lynda Boody	Carl Zimmerman
Kathy Hall	Bennett Boeschenstein
Jim Baughman	

Also present were: Elvis Guin, Carlos Sauvage, Dot Hoskin, Julie Donohue, Greg Geissler, Bob Cron, Brad Taylor, Kurt Mill, Kevin O'Shea, six Americor Volunteers from Palisade and Stephanie Schmid.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: Nelson/Kennedy to approve the minutes of the October meeting as submitted.

Motion was passed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bill Prakken reminded the Commission members of the annual retreat to be held at the *Hunt Club* near Fruita on January 11, 1997. The probable topic will be "Whither the Riverfront Commission?" Members were asked to give thought to what the answer to that question should be.

Bill informed the Commission that applicants for the two Commission vacancies were interviewed on the previous Thursday evening. Because the appointees have not yet been approved by the City Council and the County Commissioners, it was decided to wait on the announcement of who those two individuals will be. Bill and Paul agreed that all of the applicants were very qualified and that the choice had been difficult.

The December meeting will be less formal than the other monthly meetings with a short meeting and adjournment for refreshments and some social interaction.

OLD BUSINESS

Jarvis Property Prioritization

Bill provided the group with a very brief history of the Jarvis property which lies between the Watson Island Trail and Riverside Park. According to Bill, funding for construction

of a trail across the Jarvis property was included in the original Legacy grant request, but was one of the projects dropped from the plan when GOCO failed to provide full funding. At this time, there are no plans or funds for the trail that would connect Watson Island to the Blue Heron and Audubon Trails. Bill suggested that having this trail link is something the Commission would like to see at some point, probably sooner rather than later, and that the Commission should consider starting some independent activity to at least construct a temporary trail across that site. He asked Commission members if they agreed with him that this should be a priority assuming the bridge across the Colorado is on track and adequately funded.

Carl Zimmerman told of a contact he had received that day regarding four million dollars in grant money that was available from the EPA for projects of national interest. He reminded the Commission that part of the mitigation for the bicycle/pedestrian bridge involves the development of a wetlands area on the Jarvis property. He sees an opportunity to take advantage of this and other federal funds for endangered fish programs to develop an inland waterway and dike on Jarvis property. Bill added that if these funds could be acquired for the wetlands development, perhaps the City would be willing to pay for trail construction. Carl expected to know within thirty days whether or not the EPA grant is a possibility.

Motion: P. Kennedy/Boody to establish the Jarvis property as a priority for a trail connection from the 5th Street bridge to Riverside Park.

Motion was passed.

Liability Insurance Update

The issue of the adequacy of the Commission's liability insurance has been raised by the City's risk manager, Dave Roper. Bill Prakken agrees with Brian Mahoney that the existing coverage does seem to be adequate but also remarked that it was never intended to provide the broader coverage required by the Commission in its present role. Jamie Hamilton, the insurance company representative, is currently looking into coverage that is more specifically directed toward entities such as the Riverfront Commission.

NEW BUSINESS

State Parks Colorado River Management Plan

Brad Taylor, manager of the Colorado River State Park, presented the Draft Management Plan for Colorado River State Park showcasing the existing park facilities and detailing planned improvements for the various sections of the park. He will repeat the program for the general public in Palisade, Fruita and Grand Junction. The purpose is to inform community members of the progress and future plans for the park.

The park consists of four separate sections; Island Acres, Corn Lake, the Colorado River Wildlife Area and Connected Lakes on the west side of town. Brad stated that the goal is to connect all of these locations with trails from Fruita to the west to Palisade and on east beyond Island Acres through the DeBeque canyon. Specific activities

outlined in the report included expansion of the camping facilities at Island Acres, continuation of the development of the trail between Corn Lake and the mill tailings site and construction of a campground facility in Fruita. Brad expressed his desire to improve all of the park sites to better serve the needs of the public. Copies of the Draft Management Plan were left for review by Commission members. Comments are requested by December 2, 1996.

Discussion following the presentation included the suggestion by Elvis Guin that the slide presentation be made available to the schools for education and publicity about the project. Commission members agreed that audiovisual materials about the entire Riverfront Project would be beneficial.

Governor's Commission on National and Community Service

Julie Donohue, with the above Commission, explained that she and her Executive Director, Greg Geissler were in Grand Junction visiting organizations that use volunteers to learn more about different aspects of this community. They were accompanied by Dot Hoskin, a local member of the Governor's Commission. They are also here to promote the Colorado Listening Campaign which was designed by the Commission on National and Community Service to get people involved in their communities. They are looking for examples of what's working in various communities that can be used as examples to be shared with other groups around the state, and they hope to learn how the Governor's Commission can assist in the process of community involvement. She distributed an informational pamphlet and a questionnaire asking Riverfront Commission members to fill it out and return it to her office. She indicated an interest in learning more about the Riverfront Commission and its activities. Bill Prakken invited her to stay for the rest of the meeting which he felt would offer some insight.

Palisade Americorps Volunteers

Elvis Guin introduced the six of the Americorps volunteers who attended at the meeting. They, along with another six young people, are in the area working on the future site of a riverfront park in Palisade. On behalf of the Riverfront Commission, Bill Prakken extended sincere thanks for the work that they have been doing along the riverfront. The Commission gave Elvis official Riverfront T-shirts to present to all of the Americorps volunteers working in Palisade.

Van Gundy Access to Hwy. 50

Dean Van Gundy has expressed his opposition to the planned closing of the current access on Hwy. 50/5th Street that serves his property in lower downtown Grand Junction. He has asked Riverfront Foundation and Commission members to support his position. According to Bill Prakken, Van Gundy has made a counter proposal for improving the site that would include vehicular access as well as landscaping. Bill suggested that the Commission send a letter to the City and CDOT stating that it doesn't have any objection to his proposal. Commission members agreed to Bill's proposal.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Orchard Mesa Bridge

Carl Zimmerman reported that the Orchard Mesa Bicycle/Pedestrian committee held a meeting in the previous week. The invitation for bids is out with a closing date set for December 3rd. The major concern at this point is that the bids come back within the project budget. He added that State Parks has committed \$200,000 for construction of the trail from the north end of the bridge to the east side of the mill tailings site and that Eagle Rim Park construction is scheduled for 1999. The Daughters of the American Revolution are working on a statue for the park and the Historic Old Spanish Trail Association is working on interpretive information for the site.

Urban Trails Committee

Pat Kennedy reported on the success of the Walkable Communities workshops that were held in September. A subsequent meeting of local officials has been held to discuss the possibility of bringing the presenter, Dan Burden, back to the area to work on specific problem areas in the community. There was a tentative agreement to arrange for his return in the spring.

According to Lynda Boody, who is heading up the Bang's Canyon as hoc committee for the Bureau of Land Management, agreement has been reached on the management plan for the area that includes the Little Park Preserve. A graduate student from Denver has been engaged to write up the results of the committee's deliberations and the report will be available for public comment sometime in March of 1997. Recommendations for the area include a closure time at night to discourage its use for partying, upgrading of the parking facility, placement of an information kiosk that would encourage protection of the natural elements of the area and that the trail be left open to motorized use. Access to the area should be restricted to the established trails and an adopt a trail program was recommended for maintenance.

The owners of the property directly north of the Ridges Boulevard/Hwy. 340 underpass have been approached regarding the possibility of a trail right-of-way on their property that would connect the underpass to the Audubon Trail. After visiting with Pat and Bob Cron and considering their suggestions, Richard and Theresa Rounds have decided that they are not interested in having a trail in their backyard. Pat intends to approach him again sometime after the construction of the underpass and the road improvements are completed.

A follow-up meeting was held with representatives from the Bureau of Reclamation and Grand Junction City Parks to discuss the conclusions and recommendations of the canal bank trail feasibility study. Pat felt that they didn't get a clear response from the BOR as a result of that meeting. They also talked with Joe Crocker about the plans for a trail on the Matchett property. He stated that he has budgeted for a trail to extend north on 29 Road to link to the future park, but he has no plans for anything to the east of that location. The November Urban Trails Committee meeting resulted in learning from Russ Storbo that the BOR has decided to support the water users (GVWUA) if there is a conflict between canal operations and maintenance and recreation use.

Russ further informed the group that the \$250,000 in cost sharing funds that had been offered by the BOR for canal trail development is no longer available.

In addition to all of the above, Pat and Bob have found time in the last two months to meet with the Grand Valley Equestrian Association and the West Slope Wheelmen to discuss the Urban Trails Master Plan the Committee is working on and to learn more about the needs and concerns of the equestrians and cyclists in regard to the development of an urban trails network.

Legacy Update

Bob Cron reported that in addition to the Palisade effort with the Americorps volunteers, which is being financed in part by Legacy funds, Bennett Boeschstein is acquiring donations of right-of-way along the Little Salt Wash for a trail that will connect Fruita to the riverbank. A team from CSU is planning to do a feasibility study of the potential for rehab of the Old Fruita Bridge for a bicycle/pedestrian use and Fruita is working with the public to identify the best route for the trail connection between Fruita and the Loma boat launch/Kokopelli trailhead. The purchase of the Ostranger property is on schedule with the sellers hoping to close the deal sometime in December. State Parks is working to acquire to the campground site in Fruita and is preparing to construct more trail to the west of Corn Lake. The Land Conservancy is working with the Bureau of Reclamation on the possibility of managing a 14 acre wildlife area near the Colorado Wildlife Area.

The master agreement with GOCO has not yet been finalized because of problems with the language on joint and several liability. They would prefer to have every one of the sponsors be liable for all of the projects in the Colorado River Greenway Project and cannot understand why the Commission is not willing to incorporate to shield its individual members from liability. Bill Prakken has spent a substantial amount of time on resolving these issues and feels that the differences will eventually be settled, but he is also concerned because there are projects that are waiting on the signing of the agreement to receive funding.

ADMINISTRATION

Financial Report

The financial statements were approved as submitted.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Carlos Sauvage asked the Commission to send a letter to Rick Schroder requesting permission to install a utility type pole on his property on the west bank of the Gunnison River to hang a warning sign across the river up stream from the Redlands Dam. He said that he already has permission from the BLM to place the corresponding pole on the east bank and that Public Service Company will do the installation for free in December if Schroder agrees. Bill asserted that the Commission would be happy to send the letter.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:43 P.M..

The Board of Directors
of the
City of
Chicago
Chicago, Illinois