

GRAND JUNCTION/MESA COUNTY  
RIVERFRONT COMMISSION

MINUTES

APRIL 15, 1997

The meeting was called to order at 7:34 P.M. at the Palisade Veteran's Memorial Community Center by Co-Chair Bill Prakken. Those present from the Commission:

Bill Prakken	Lynda Boody
Bill Findlay	Jeanette Main-Goecke
Pat Kennedy	Judy Kennedy
Carl Zimmerman	Jack Yates
Lenna Watson	Paul Nelson
Bennett Boeschstein	Jim Baughman

Also present: Bob Cron, Elvis Guin, Steve Hickman, Doris Butler, Tony Mitchel, Dorothy McNeese, Bob Bleiberg, Brad Taylor, Jan Pomrenke, Don Hobbs, Dave Stoker, Jim Temple, Linda Voss, Drake Jandreau, Stephanie Schmid and other Palisade residents.

Approval of Minutes

Motion: Nelson/Main-Goecke to approve the minutes of the March meeting as submitted.

Motion was passed.

Announcements

The intergovernmental raft trip is scheduled for Friday, June 13<sup>th</sup>. The plan is to float from Loma to Westwater, through Ruby Canyon. Stephanie will send a memo to all intergovernmental participants as soon as she has information on times and places.

Bill Prakken informed the Commission that the Jarvis property cleanup, west of 5<sup>th</sup> Street, will be done shortly. The Department of Energy has given the City a check for the final remediation. He stated that planning for the trail to link Watson Island and Riverside park should begin soon.

The new resolution for the Riverfront Commission has now been approved by Grand Junction, Mesa County, Fruita and Palisade. Effective with that approval, Fruita and Palisade will be participating in choosing Commission members and in helping to fund the Commission.

Philanthropy Days will be held this year on June 4<sup>th</sup> through the 6<sup>th</sup>. Stephanie asked that Commission members who might be interested in participating contact the Riverfront office.

## Old Business

### Jarvis Property

Bill asked Commission members who might be interested in being members of the Jarvis property committee contact him. Paul Nelson and Bill Findlay have already expressed an interest in serving. Lenna Watson stated that she would also like to be on the Jarvis committee.

## New Business

### Palisade Plans & Progress

Jack Yates provided the Commission with copies of the plans for Palisade's new riverfront park. He explained that the master plan has been revised several times since the idea was first developed for the Legacy project a year and a half ago. They are now working on a "several year" plan that will help them determine how best to use the Legacy money. One of the first steps is to plant approximately sixty flowering crabapple trees along the existing river trail. A boat ramp and additional cleanup are also planned for this part of the park.

A bridge will be required at the end of Logan Street that will provide both pedestrian and vehicular access to the park across the Grand Valley Irrigation Canal. He reported that the Department of Energy has contacted him about donating the bridge that was used to cross Highway 50 at the rail/truck staging area for Chaney Reservoir. Jack emphasized that savings realized on acquisition of the donated bridge would allow more money to be spent on the park, but he cautioned that there will be costs in moving and installing the bridge in its new location. A parking area will be developed on the south side of the canal to serve the park's picnic area, riverfront trail and multipurpose play fields. The concept is to develop a "natural" park that will require very little maintenance.

The Francis Constructors property to the west has been surveyed and is in the process of being appraised. Jack is confident that acquisition of that land will take place. He hopes the canal company will allow them to use the canal road from 36 ¼ Road to access the park from the west, but there will be no parking there. The main entrance to the park will be at Logan Street. The possibility of softball fields is also being considered, but that is in conflict with the concept of a "natural" park. Jack mentioned that there has been some discussion of getting a horse to patrol the park.

Drake Jandreau, a teacher at Palisade High School, informed the group that he is looking into the possibility of a conservation easement for the property at the west end of the park. He is in contact with the Colorado River Focus Area Group, an interagency group involved in acquiring wetlands. The easement could be worth \$54,000 which would not be enough to purchase the land, but would provide an alternative for the land and would guarantee retention of the riparian zone as it is and allow the establishment of an educational facility there. He stated that he had no objection to the riverfront trail crossing the property under the conservation easement scenario. He added that there

is a foot bridge in place in this area, but the access is currently restricted to use by the high school students.

### Orchard Heritage Program

Rob Bleiberg, the administrator for the Mesa County Land Conservancy, explained the nature of the Land Conservancy's involvement with the Riverfront Commission and their two projects that are connected to the Legacy grant. One of the projects involves being able to purchase conservation easements, where in the past the Land Conservancy has had to rely on the donation of easements. They hope to have their first easement purchase under contract in the next few weeks. Their goal is to buy development rights on agricultural land along the river corridor to buffer the river, wildlife habitat and the trail. The other area where the Land Conservancy is actively working with the Riverfront Commission is the Orchard Heritage Revolving Fund. The project will allow the Conservancy to purchase a piece of agricultural land that is not being utilized to its fullest potential. The land will be improved by planting either an orchard or a vineyard, placing a conservation easement on it and then selling it to either a new farmer or an experienced farmer who wishes to expand his operation. This will keep the land in production and on the tax rolls. Funding for the orchard project will become available after July 1<sup>st</sup> of this year.

Bill Findlay asked Rob what criteria would be used to identify potential properties for this program. His response was that agricultural productivity and viability as a farm for the long term would be critical. The land's relationship to the community in terms of maintaining esthetic appeal and character of the site was an additional item mentioned. How threatened the parcel is by development is another concern. Its proximity to utilities, services and road access will also be considered. The ultimate factor will be the participation of a willing seller and a deal that makes economic sense to the Land Conservancy. He emphasized that the proceeds from the sale will be reinvested in another piece of land to repeat the process.

### Climax Mill Site Plan Consultants

Bill Prakken asked for a volunteer to participate in interviews of consulting firms being considered to prepare a master plan for future development of the Climax Mill site. The interviews will be held on Thursday, April 24<sup>th</sup>. Carl Zimmerman indicated that he would be willing to represent the Commission.

### Committee Reports

#### Orchard Mesa Bridge

Carl Zimmerman reported that they are at the point of selecting colors for the various parts of the bridge. According to City Engineer, Don Newton, construction of the bridge should be completed by June 15 or possibly sooner. Work on the trail connecting to the bridge on the south side of the river will be started as soon as the bridge is finished. An addition to the project will be a bridge across the dike on the north side of the school which will provide access via a trail on the west side of Orchard Mesa Middle School.

This represents a change in the original contract, but the project is under budget at this time.

Bill Prakken inquired as to the status of the trail planned for the north side of the river. Don Hobbs, Assistant Director with Parks and Recreation, announced that the request for bids for trail construction was supposed to go out on the 15<sup>th</sup> or 16<sup>th</sup> of April. Bill asked about the possibility of extending the trail to the east to connect with 27 ½ Road as a part of this phase of construction. The response was that the estimates are higher than the funds available so it will depend on how the bids come in. Don indicated that there was not enough budgeted to take the trail to the railroad bridge and therefore, the trail will stop at 5<sup>th</sup> Street.

Bill Prakken took this opportunity to announce that there will be a name the bridge contest with the Riverfront Commission judging the entries. He was uncertain as to when the deadline was for the contest, but he felt that the decision would have to be made fairly quickly in order to have the bronze plaque ready for the dedication. He added that he has been advised that it has been the policy of Grand Junction to not name their capital improvements after people.

#### Urban Trails Committee

Bob Cron explained the purpose of the Urban Trails Committee and its geographic area of concern to the Palisade residents in the audience. He mentioned the possibility of having Palisade and Fruita developing corresponding trail committees to deal with trail planning within the boundaries of their respective communities.

He went on to say that the Urban Trails Master Plan, specific projects of street striping to create bike lanes and the issue of canal bank trails are among the activities engaged in by the Committee. The Urban Trails Master Plan, when adopted by the City and the County, will become an amendment to the County's Multi-Modal plan. A letter to the editor of the Daily Sentinel regarding canal bank trails will be published in the near future with the hope of generating some response from the public in order to demonstrate support for the concept.

#### Legacy Update

Bob Cron introduced himself to the group in his role as the coordinator for the Colorado River Greenway Legacy project which involves a three-year program with a \$4.5 million grant from Great Outdoors Colorado. He added that there is also \$10 to \$11 million in local and in-kind dollars matching that grant to make a \$15 million project. He added that there are thirteen sponsors in the project who are all willing partners in the venture.

Among the current Legacy activities discussed was the possible acquisition of Hidden Lake, which is on the west side of the Colorado River directly east of the Broadway bridge. This project is being considered by the Division of Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife and the City of Grand Junction. A boat take out site at the Redlands Power and Water diversion dam is another project under direction of the Legacy sponsors. Elam Construction has built the road, parking lot and access trail to the boat takeout. The Legacy grant will pay for fencing around Elam's gravel operation. The Bureau of Land Management is working to acquire 50 acres along the Gunnison River, upstream

from Whitewater, that will serve as a boat launch/takeout site and will provide riverside access on public lands from just south of Grand Junction to Delta. Mesa County has offered to step in and assist with the acquisition of this property. In Fruita, they are working with the local refinery to acquire over a mile of right-of-way which would be a part of the trail connecting Fruita to the Loma boat launch site.

#### Safety Committee

Lenna Watson reported that the Committee is still working on the trail marker system to identify trail locations the purpose of locating persons in need of assistance. She and Brad Taylor visited dispatch personnel at the police department to discuss the options that have been considered. They supported the use of the county road grid system for identification purposes. Brad suggested that distance information be added to the grid trail markers. He pointed out the need to make the identification system user friendly and also to make it useable for locating trail sections in need of maintenance. Lenna said that they would be looking into the possibility of applying for grants to pay for off trail distance markers. Lenna added that, according to the dispatch personnel, people have a difficult time figuring out where they are on the trail or what point they used to access the trail.

#### Bridge & Trail Dedication Committee

Bill Prakken announced that the bridge and the trails connecting to the bridge will be completed this summer, and that there had been some discussion of having a celebratory event to commemorate this addition to the Colorado Riverfront Trail system. This year is also the tenth anniversary of the creation of the Riverfront Commission and the opportunity to acknowledge both of these milestones is being considered.

The concept that is being discussed is to have something at noon on a Friday with a "lunch of sorts", a few brief remarks and a ribbon cutting/media event. The possibility of expanding that to include an afternoon touring other parts of the riverfront that have been developed in the last ten years and then some sort of evening reception to honor the pioneers of the Riverfront Commission has also been mentioned. A July or August date is being considered in order to allow for completion of the associated trails as well as the bridge. Bill asked if Commission members were in favor of sponsoring such an event and for ideas on what kind of activities should be planned. The idea of the moment was to have a bridge dance.

#### Trail Maps Committee

Lynda Boody is just getting started. She has contacted the City mapping department and plans to call a meeting of the committee soon. Stephanie suggested that Ken Sims with the County has most of the trails already mapped on his computer.

## **Administration**

### **Financial Report**

Bill Prakken suggested that revenue accounts be added to show the individual contributions of Grand Junction, Mesa County, Fruita and Palisade. There was no other discussion concerning the financial statements.

### **Public Comment**

Jim Temple asked how application to the Commission could be made. Bill Prakken answered that Commission members all fill at-large positions. There is no representative specifically from Palisade or Fruita. Historically, a notice has been published in the newspaper requesting applications be sent to the attention of the Grand Junction City Clerk. Interviews have been scheduled with members of the City Council and County Commission. Bill stated that he assumed that it would involve a similar type process with the inclusion of representatives from Palisade and Fruita, but the mechanics have not been worked out yet. He suggested that he send a letter of interest to Stephanie Nye, the City Clerk at Grand Junction City Hall.

Jim asked about possible conflict between hunting activities and the use of the riverfront for recreational trails. It was suggested that Commission member Kirk Rider contact Jim to provide additional information on this matter. He also expressed concern about liability for the landowner when a trail right-of-way is granted and the problem of trespass on private property adjacent to trails.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:17 P.M.