

GRAND JUNCTION/MESA COUNTY
RIVERFRONT COMMISSION

MINUTES

March 18, 1997

The March meeting of the Grand Junction/Mesa County Riverfront Commission was called to order at 7:34 P.M. by Co-Chair Bill Prakken at the City Hall in Fruita. Those in attendance from the Commission:

Paul Nelson	Pat Kennedy
Bill Prakken	Bill Findlay
Jim Baughman	Kirk Rider
Bennett Boeschstein	Jeanette Main-Goecke
Lenna Watson	

Also present were: Brad Taylor, Elvis Guin, John Schneiger, Sue Gormley, Kurt Mill, Clayton Dause, Don Hobbs, Vi Sis, Alan Bair, Rondo Beuchler, Cindy Shirriel, Bob Cron, Lyle Baldwin, Bill Chenoweth, Cindy Sherrill, Stephanie Schmid and several other unnamed Fruita residents.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: Kennedy/Nelson to approve the February minutes as submitted.

Motion was passed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bill Prakken welcomed those who were present and encouraged everyone interested in Riverfront activities to attend the spring Intergovernmental meeting to be held on the coming Thursday, March 20 at the BLM office on H Road at 7:00 A.M. He explained that this meeting provides a unique opportunity to network with others interested in similar projects and to coordinate activities related to the Riverfront Trail system throughout the valley.

OLD BUSINESS

Jarvis Property

Bill reminded the Commission that they had identified construction of a trail across the Jarvis property to connect the Watson Island Trail and Riverside Park as being their number one priority for 1997. He added that funding for that section of trail was cut out of the Legacy project when the original request was not fully funded. Application was made to GOCO for additional funds, but indications are that more funding will not be received at this time. Bill described the Commission's position as needing to go out and scratch for the money needed for the project. He asked what other Commission members thoughts were on the subject. Questions were asked as to the length of the

proposed trail and the cost estimated by the Legacy coordinator for the unfunded grant request. Answers of one mile and about \$200,000 were provided. The need to finish the neighborhood plan for Riverside was mentioned. The issue of a dike for the Riverside community also needs to be resolved. The existing road adjacent to the river could provide a temporary trail alignment in light of the fact that the neighborhood preference appears to be to end its use by motor vehicles. He suggested that a committee be appointed from the Commission to deal with the Jarvis project. Bill Findlay and Paul Nelson indicated that they would be interested in serving on such a committee. Bill stated that he would work on putting together a committee to head up the Jarvis property project.

Old Spanish Trail Study - State Historical Grant

Bill Chenoweth informed the gathering that he and Jim Robb had received for a State Historical Society grant in 1994 to fund research on the origins of the Old Spanish Trail, North Branch and to determine its route through Mesa County, in particular its crossing point on the Colorado River. According to Bill, the main Old Spanish Trail started in Santa Fe and ended up in Los Angeles. It did not, however, go straight to southern California. It actually went through Durango, Dolores, Moab, Green River, Las Vegas and then to Los Angeles, apparently because the traders wished to avoid unfriendly Indian tribes along the way. The northern branch of the trail came up through Gunnison, Montrose, Delta, Grand Junction and joined the main trail again somewhere south of Green River.

Because few of the traders and trappers kept diaries or maps of their travels, Bill has found it difficult to document the actual location of the original trail. Based on journals starting around the late 1840's, he estimates that the crossing of the Colorado was located at about 28 ¼ Road. He also told the group that the Colorado was once called the Blue River before it was called the Grand and that the Gunnison River was called the Grand River and the Eagle Fork before it was called the Gunnison making it easy for anyone researching this subject to become confused. He added that the Hayden survey, done in 1875 found the "Salt Lake Wagon Road" which is believed to be the route of the old expeditions. Pasture and water for livestock were critical concerns for the early traveler, making places like Kannah Creek and Green River attractive sites for camping while traveling the Old Spanish Trail.

Bill advised the Commission that the report for the Historical Society must be completed by the end of the year. He said that there should be sufficient money in the grant to design an interpretive sign to place somewhere along the trail detailing the origins of the Old Spanish Trail. Its proposed location is the future Eagle Rim Park, located near where the trail crossed the Colorado.

NEW BUSINESS

Fruita Trails Update

Lyle Baldwin, Mayor of Fruita, welcomed the Commission to Fruita and expressed the community's excitement about becoming a more active partner in the Commission's activities. He assured the Commission that the opportunity to plan ahead and protect

the river corridor is very important to Fruita. Bennett Boeschstein emphasized the concern that commercial development pressure in the area adjacent to the Devils Canyon Science and Learning Center has made the need to preserve river access and adjacent openspace even greater.

The Fruita Riverfront Action Plan calls for a major regional park of 50 to 100 acres just in back of the commercial development to the south and west of I-70. That plan is coming to fruition thanks to Fruita's portion of the Legacy grant. Kirk Mill reported that State Parks is working with Western Colorado Crossroads, who had the foresight to acquire about 20 acres in the area which they plan to donate to the park project. He is also working with Corn Construction to acquire property adjacent to that site. The two properties combined should provide a good foothold for the future State Park.

The Fruita/Kokopelli Trail connection linking Fruita and Loma is also being actively pursued. According to Bennett, three different alternatives are being considered: north of I-70, south of I-70 and south of the river on BLM and Bureau of Reclamation lands. The most promising alternative appears to be the approximately 4 mile route north of I-70, largely do to the cooperation of landowners along that alignment who are willing to donate right-of-way for the trail.

The second annual Fat Tire Festival is promising to become a big event for Fruita according to Rondo Beuchler. He stated that the Fruita is becoming known as a mountain bike area. They are working with the BLM to sign the local trails for mountain bike use.

Bennett's final comments addressed the Legacy project which has brought \$4.5 million to the valley to develop trails, parks, wildlife areas and openspace. Included in Fruita's share of that grant are the State Park and campground, the Fruita/Loma trail section, the Little Salt Wash project which runs through the middle of Fruita and the restoration of the old Fruita Bridge for bicycle/pedestrian use. Colorado River openspace is another part of Fruita's Legacy plans which will involve the acquisition of land in conjunction with State Parks. Snook's Bottom and land adjacent to the Kings View subdivision are also on the list of riverfront acreage to be acquired. Bennett credited the Legacy project as being a fruitful effort of cooperation among the various sponsors and the Legacy Coordinator for doing an excellent job of keeping everyone on track.

John Schneiger explained the changes that have taken place making Fruita a funding partner in the Riverfront Commission along with Palisade and Mesa County. He also reported that significant improvements to the Dinosaur Hill site have been made with the assistance of Mesa County Lottery funds. He feels that it should be considered as a part of the Riverfront Trail.

Naming the Bridge

Bill Prakken reported that a bridge naming contest had been suggested and that Mari Steinboch with Grand Junction City Parks Department has agreed to advertise the contest in conjunction with a contest to name the future park at the Climax Mill tailings site. Commission members approved of the idea use a contest to find a name for the bridge.

Eco-Fairs

The Commission has been approached by several organizations regarding the possibility of participating in environmental fairs. Members were asked whether or not they viewed this kind of activity as a priority for the Commission. After a brief discussion, it was apparent that no one present was interested in developing such a program and that it was not a priority at this time.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Orchard Mesa Bridge

There was no one present to make a report.

Urban Trails Committee

After a brief explanation of what the Urban Trails Committee was, Bob Cron discussed the Urban Trails Master Plan which will eventually become an amendment to the County's Multi-Modal Plan. He mentioned the proposed bike lane on 10th Street, the Colinas del Valle area south of the Ridges and the CDOT meeting to discuss the statewide bicycle trail plan.

Legacy Update

Bob Cron, who is also the Coordinator for the Legacy project reviewed the recent activities of the Legacy Steering Committee. He highlighted projects including the Fruita/Loma trail, improvements on the Palisade Trail, the Mesa County Land Conservancy involvement in wildlife and wetlands projects with the Bureau of Reclamation, the State Parks right-of-way acquisitions between Corn Lake and the mill tailings site, the Orchard Mesa Bicycle/Pedestrian Bridge and the trail to connect the bridge to Watson Island and 5th Street. He reported that the Legacy sponsors had been asked by GOCO to apply for a third round of Legacy funding, but had just received a "dear John" letter informing them that their request was not going to be considered. Bob ended his report with a brief description of the American Heritage Rivers program proposed by the President in his State of the Union speech. He said that very little was known about the program, but he was making every effort to learn more in hopes that it might provide some funding for the Riverfront project.

Safety Committee

Lenna Watson informed the Commission about the facility improvement cards that the committee is working on and efforts to mark the trails for identification and location for search and rescue personnel. An attempt is being made to find a solution that will combine the features of pinpointing trail locations in order to respond to emergencies and that will also provide mileage markers for the benefit of the trail users. The ideal solution is still being debated.

Bridge & Trail Dedication Committee

Bill Prakken reported that the Committee has not met yet because the completion date for both the bridge and the trail connecting to the north end are uncertain.

Trail Maps Committee

The committee has not yet held a meeting.

Hotchkiss Property

Kirk Rider stated that the City of Grand Junction has approved the Walcher land swap and property line adjustments necessary to conclude the Hotchkiss property deal are almost done. He will be sending a the Foundation a bill for recording fees and a nominal number of hours for the surveying. He asked that thank you letters be sent to Scott Thompson of Thompson Langford Surveying and Dale Williams of Abstract Title for their generous donation of time and talent toward the accomplishment of this task. He also recommended that the City be asked to wave the Transportation Capacity Payment fees associated with this transfer for Warren Walcher.

ADMINISTRATION

Financial Report

Stephanie explained that the two sets of financial statements provided represented the Legacy project and the Riverfront Commission operating funds. There was no further discussion.

Motion: Nelson/Rider to approve the financial statements as submitted.

1997 Budget

The 1997 Riverfront Commission budget, copies of which had been provided to Commission members in advance, was approved with out discussion.

PUBLIC COMMENT

John Schneiger informed the Commission that Fruita and the BLM have been working on a valley wide trail map that may be of interest to the Commission's Trail Map Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 P.M. .



PALISADE

(81526)

Not all roads may be shown or named on map. Some roads may be private, proposed, or under construction.

To Clifton,
Grand Junction



USWEST
DIRECT.

I-70

To Jct. I-70 (Exit 42)

To Jct. I-70 (Exit 44),
Glenwood Springs

37-170 Rd

37-370 Rd

Rodeo Rd

Grand Valley Canal

Colorado River

See
INSET

MEETING LOCATION

