

**GRAND JUNCTION/MESA COUNTY
RIVERFRONT COMMISSION**

MINUTES

May 21, 1996

The meeting was called to order at 7:38 P.M. in the auditorium at the Devil's Canyon Learning Center in Fruita by Co-Chair Bill Prakken. Those present from the Commission:

Lynda Boody	Bill Prakken
Pat Kennedy	Judy Kennedy
Bennett Boeschstein	Kirk Rider
Lenna Watson	Paul Nelson
Connie Bennett	

Also present: Bob Cron, Joe Stevens, Troy Rarick, Chris Bennetts, Gordon Vetter, Ray Phipps, Bob Shaltis, Mike Perry, Bill Chenoweth, Fred Bohlmann, Brad Taylor, Alan Baier, Dusty Dunbar, Lyle Baldwin, Jim Morris, Cindy Sherrill, Bob Sherrill, Pat Peretti, John Schneider and Stephanie Schmid .

Approval of Minutes

Motion: P Kennedy/Rider to approve the minutes of the April meeting as submitted.

Motion was passed.

Announcements

Bill Prakken informed the Commission that the GOCO board will be meeting in Denver on Wednesday, May 22 to decide the awards for the first round of Legacy grants. There will be a press conference in Denver to publicize the board's decision. There will then be a press conference in Grand Junction the following morning at 9:00 A.M. at Junior Service League Park with GOCO staff and Tillie Bishop in attendance to announce the Colorado River Greenway award. Bill asked that all who could be present attend to demonstrate their support for the efforts of the Legacy steering committee and Tillie Bishop whose efforts were valuable in behalf of our request.

Judy Kennedy reminded the Commission that the dedication of the Old Spanish Trail will take place on Sunday, July 9 adjacent to the Lions Club Park at 28 ½ Road and Highway 50 at 10:00 A.M. The National Old Spanish Trail Association will be holding their annual meeting that weekend in Grand Junction and will be in attendance. She asked Bill or Paul Nelson to be present to represent the Commission.

Lynda Boody announced that the annual float trip will take place on June 14 and will be on the Gunnison River. Rafters will need to meet at the Redlands Dam at 9:00 A.M. from whence they will be shuttled to Whitewater to meet the boats and guides provided

by the BLM. In addition to the raft trip, the group will visit the proposed site of the new and improved boat take-out and will be given a tour of the nearly completed fish ladder adjacent to the Redlands Dam.

Old Business

There was no old business to discuss.

New Business

Fruita Riverfront Park Update

Bennett Boeschstein welcomed the Commission to Fruita. He explained that Fruita is planning a minimum 100 acre park just west of the Devil's Canyon Center on the gravel pit lands that are now owned by Elam Construction and Western Colorado Crossroads, Inc. represented by Chris Bennetts. He pointed out to Commission members that WCCI is providing the land that is the match for the Fruita's portion to the Legacy Project. Plans for the area include a State Park campground and trails to connect Fruita to Grand Junction and Loma. He outlined the alternate trail routes that have been considered on both sides of the Colorado River. Much of the right-of-way is outside of Fruita's jurisdiction and will require cooperation from the county to acquire and maintain. They are working with the Bureau of Reclamation in developing the route from Fruita to Loma and the Kokopelli Trail.

Members of the Fruita community in attendance shared their thoughts on the Fruita riverfront development with the Commission. Mayor Lyle Baldwin felt that it was a good fit with their Community Plan and Highway 340 Corridor Plan. He added that the schools in the west end of the valley have not had the opportunity for riverfront access and educational benefits afforded by that access that other parts of the valley have had. He hoped that the development of the Fruita riverfront would remedy that. City Council member Gordon Vetter saw the economic value of having the riverfront trail and state campground in Fruita to add to their tourism promotion efforts. Troy Rarick reinforced the concept of tourism promotion by adding his vision of visitors to Fruita using the trail to access the Kokopelli trail and starting trips to Moab in Fruita. Dusty Dunbar was enthusiastic about the possibilities for environmental education and wildlife habitat studies.

Kirk Rider took the opportunity to ask the Fruita residents attending the meeting what their feelings were concerning the reactivation of the refinery in Fruita. A frank and honest discussion ensued with the consensus being that they would rather not see it be used again for that purpose and that it would certainly detract from their quality of life and desirability as a tourist destination. Lyle Baldwin stated that Fruita was working toward industrial development, but their preference was for quiet and clean industry. He did point out that the refinery is in the county and that Fruita is not responsible for the permitting of this activity.

Mike Perry, Director of the Devil's Canyon Learning Center also welcomed the Commission to Fruita and expressed his support for the Riverfront Project and the

benefits it will bring to their location. He informed the group that the Dinomaze located directly behind his facility would be opening within the week.

Committee Reports

New Trails

Orchard Mesa Bridge

Paul Nelson reported that the approach to the bridge has been redesigned to circle the future Eagle Rim Park and descend the bluff to the bridge. The engineer has developed three bridge design alternatives, but the actual design has not yet been selected.

Old Spanish Trail

Judy Kennedy reported that work by crews from the Resource Center the County Jail have transformed the trail site beyond recognition. Vicki Felmlee will be the master of ceremonies for the dedication because both she and Carlos Sauvage will be out of town on that date.

Urban Trails Committee

Although there was not a quorum at the May meeting, the "Walkable Communities" workshops were discussed. Jody Kliska and Michael Drollinger from the City attended the meeting to report on the progress of these which are planned for September 23 and 24. Urban Trails Committee members are being offered a reduced rate for attending the workshops because the Committee has agreed to cosponsor the event with the City.

Communication between the County and the Urban Trails Committee has been established by way of the Metropolitan Planning Organization and Cliff Davidson. Pat stated that the Committee is encouraging the City and County Public Works Departments to work together in developing a trails master plan. A meeting of Pat, Bill Prakken, Paul Nelson, Ron Maupin and Janet Terry took place to discuss the progress of the Trails Committee and the canal trail feasibility study. As a result, Pat met with Phil Bertrand of the Grand Valley Irrigation Company to establish a basis for future communication with the GVIC. Mark Relph and Shawn Cooper are working on a map that will incorporate bike routes, bike paths and the canal trails to provide a graphic representation of the work the Urban Trails Committee has accomplished. The deadline for completion of the final report for the feasibility study has been extended to September 1, 1996.

Legacy Project

Bob Cron, Paul Nelson and Bill Prakken went to Denver on May 3 to make a presentation to a subcommittee of the GOCO Board on the Colorado River Greenway Legacy Project. The information available at this point indicates that we will be receiving between 4.5 and 5 million dollars. This is significantly less than what was

requested, but will still be a big boost to the Riverfront Project. The exact amount will be announced on Wednesday, the 22nd. Fine-tuning of the project will have to be worked out with GOCO once we know the actual amount of the grant and the process is expected to take up to two months.

Trail Operations

Gunnison River Boat Take-Out

Kirk Rider reported on the progress made thus far on developing the boat take-out just above the Redlands Dam on the Gunnison River. Carlos Sauvage has taken him to view the site of the put-in at Whitewater and the proposed location of the take-out on the Gunnison River just above the Redlands Power Company roller dam. Kirk felt that the project would improve boating safety enormously without costing a lot of money. His feeling is that all the participants seem genuinely committed to making it happen. Judy Kennedy has found an Explorer Scout who would like to make working on this his Explorer project.

Safety Committee

Lenna Watson reported that the Safety Committee is in the process of video taping the trails to identify areas of potential liability in the case of accident and injury and to develop recommendations for improvements to the trails. Judy Kennedy commented that there are loose boards on a bridge on the Audubon Trail and a root coming up through the pavement.

Administration

Financial Report

Bill Prakken reviewed the budget drafted by the Commission staff and Co-Chairs. He observed that some expenses such as the Legacy line item are a guess based on expenses incurred thus far this year. It was suggested that a motion be made to request an installment from the Foundation on their commitment of financial support to the Commission

Motion: Rider/Watson to adopt the 1996 budget as presents.

Motion was passed.

Motion: Watson/Bennett to request \$3,000 or one half of their 1996 commitment.

Motion was passed.

Other Business

Bill Prakken informed the Commission that a longtime supporter of the Riverfront Project, Oby Blanchard, had recently passed away and that the suggestion has been made that a bench be placed on Watson Island in his memory to recognize the major

contribution he made to the clean up effort there. The cost of the bench is \$1,000 and contributions are encouraged.

Public Comment

John Schneiger, Fruita's City Manager, commented that Fruita would like to become an equity partner in the Riverfront Commission. His hope is that Fruita and Palisade will become more involved and provide financial support as well. Bill Prakken agreed that these ideas should be discussed. The timing on developing this new alliance also needs to be discussed, but the Commission does encourage the greater participation by Palisade and Fruita. John also asked that the Fruita Riverfront Park be placed on the agenda as a regular item under committee reports.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 P.M.