

**GRAND JUNCTION CITY COUNCIL
WORKSHOP SUMMARY
May 2, 2005**

The City Council of the City of Grand Junction, Colorado met on Monday, May 2, 2005 at 7:02 p.m. in the City Hall Auditorium to discuss workshop items. Those present were Councilmembers Bonnie Beckstein, Teresa Coons, Jim Doody Gregg Palmer, Jim Spehar, Doug Thomason and President of the Council Bruce Hill.

Summaries and action on the following topics:

1. **CITY COUNCIL ASSIGNMENTS:** Council President Bruce Hill distributed a proposed assignment list to open up discussion on the various Council commitments. City Manager Kelly Arnold reminded Council the need to assign two Councilmembers to the new Parking Management Advisory Group for the parking garage. Council President Hill added that there is also the Storm Water Management (5-2-1 Committee) Group. Councilmember Coons advised that the Methamphetamine Task Force has also requested a Council representative. Councilmember Thomason volunteered for Strategic Team #3. Councilmember Palmer advised that it is not necessary for two Councilmembers to be on the parking committee. Councilmember Coons volunteered for the Housing Authority, Councilmember Beckstein volunteered for Strategic Team #2 (I-70 Utilization), Councilmember Thomason volunteered for the Strategic Plan Committee addressing weeds and Councilmember Doody volunteered for both the Gateway & Beautification Strategic Team and the 5-2-1 Committee.

Action Summary: Councilmembers accepted their new assignments and directed the Clerk to place the item on the Wednesday agenda for formal adoption.

2. **CITY OWNED PROPERTY** - This is a continuation of the City Council's discussion for City owned property. Public Works & Utilities Director Mark Relph reviewed this topic. He reviewed the history of the ongoing discussion regarding the three properties that have been discussed previously with Council. Council decided to take no further action on those properties. Regarding the other properties, one out in the adobes, 120 acres that was to be proposed for a trade with BLM. He said the BLM is not interested due to the cumbersome exchange process and there being no obvious value to them.

Councilmember Spehar suggested a particular piece owned by BLM that is valuable as a part of the City's watershed that might have public value.

Mr. Relph next reviewed a tract off of Little Park Road. There is a proposal to subdivide it into two parcels, one developable and one to remain as open space. One tract would be 13 acres and worth approximately \$380,000 to \$500,000. Any purchasers would have to retain access to the trail.

Councilmember Palmer asked if a public vote would be required to proceed with the proposal. Mr. Relph said there is no restriction on the deed requiring such a vote. Councilmember Palmer asked if the City was going to dedicate proceeds for a specific community benefit rather than put it in the general fund, such as affordable housing.

Council President Hill said the mountain biking group (COPMOBA) should have a chance to make comments first as well as the Urban Trails Committee.

City Manager Kelly Arnold noted that COPMOBA urged that an access be retained for vehicles too.

Councilmember Beckstein expressed concern that any new owners might begin thinking of the access as a private access. Mr. Relph said they would need to make that clear on the deed but agreed there is potential for that.

Council President Hill reiterated that biking and trail groups should be included in discussions. Councilmember Palmer said they could be agreeable if a specific project is identified for the proceeds.

Councilmember Spehar said certainly the staff should talk to the surrounding property owners like the BLM.

Council asked about the coordination with the Lunch Loop trail areas. Mr. Arnold said discussions are taking place. Council President Hill said this piece should be included in that discussion as well.

Mr. Relph said the next two items are Blue Heron and South Rim properties. He said staff was directed to talk to the Mesa Land Trust about their interest. He distributed a letter from Rob Bleiberg of Mesa Land Trust which stated these particular properties are of no value to them. Councilmember Coons asked if he had spoken to the Audubon Society. Mr. Relph said that he had not and he felt the Blue Heron properties may have some value in the future due to development occurring in that area.

Mr. Relph said the Hutto Property is part of an old sewer lagoon. He said that it has been cleaned up but it is down below the bluff and is in the

floodplain. He said that it was discussed to possibly “bank” it as wetlands. With the removal of the tamarisk, the property has become wetlands.

Councilmember Spehar said the City could use it for wetlands credit if the Riverside Parkway takes out wetlands. Mr. Relph said that there is no need to have the property banked but thought the City should reduce the water and thus mosquito habitat. Mr. Relph however thought wetland banking could be used for the Big Pipe project.

Mr. Relph said that Dunn and the Southside Community Park properties will be used for Riverside Parkway. Mr. Relph said, regarding the property north of I-70 at G Road, the airport will be willing to take property but does not want to pay for it and the BLM has no interest in the property because the property has no access.

Councilmember Palmer stated that the City should just give the property to the Airport. He said the purpose of this discussion is to identify properties the City has no use for and may be disposed of.

Councilmember Spehar agreed with giving the property to the Airport.

Mr. Relph said the Monument Village open space was a mistake and that the City should give the open space back to HOA.

Mr. Relph said, regarding the Steam Plant, the City is reassessing their options regarding the clean up and the groundwater clean up. He thought that it might be less expensive if the right development partner is found. He said the prior owner has participated in some of the clean up. Mr. Relph said the City has approximately \$250,000 in the clean up with a potential for another \$250,000.

Councilmember Doody asked why the clean up stopped. Mr. Relph said that there were some cautions that came up so there was a need for testing and monitoring the area for those cautions.

Councilmember Palmer asked if the previous owners are still participating. City Attorney John Shaver said the previous owners are only there for the PCB's and the next step is to pursue an RFP and look at the project relative to the contamination. Mr. Arnold said the previous owners are still open to help improve the appearance of the adjacent power plant.

Council President Hill asked about the Brownfield's grant. Mr. Relph said there is still a possibility; having a developer participating will enhance the probability for a Brownfield's grant.

Council President Hill stated that he feels that it is the City's duty to get it cleaned up for the citizens.

Mr. Relph said the next item is the 3rd and Main parking lot. He said DDA has had recent contact from an interested party and may hear something back soon. Council President Hill asked if Council was ok with DDA pursuing that development. Councilmember Spehar felt perhaps it should be maintained as open space in the downtown or requiring open space as a part of a development proposal. Another possibility is with the workforce housing project, a trade for housing property. Councilmember Palmer said the City should look at an RFP to see what opportunities are out there. Councilmembers Coons and Thomason agreed, Councilmember Doody felt the open space would be best for the downtown area, and Councilmember Beckstein thought that a combination between the two with a proposal that will allow pedestrians to congregate. Mr. Arnold said that staff needs to work with DDA on a draft RFP. Councilmember Spehar said that staff will need to evaluate the need for parking as well.

Mr. Relph said the last piece is on Webster Road. He suggested the City donate the property to Habitat for Humanity. Councilmember Coons asked to be recused, because she is on the volunteer committee with the Habitat for Humanity. City Attorney Shaver said a recusal may not be necessary. Council was comfortable with her participation.

Councilmember Doody asked if the City will get any credit for such donations. City Attorney Shaver stated the property goes back on tax rolls but there is no credit per se.

City Council favored the donation to Habitat for Humanity.

Mr. Relph said there are two additional parcel properties not previously discussed. The first property is another Hutto lagoon property which is isolated and surrounded by an other property owner. He said the adjacent owner wants to use the property for open space in conjunction with a development further south. Mr. Relph said the property owner has offered \$1,500.00 for the property. Mr. Relph recommends Council accept the offer and require the property owner to replat his property to include this parcel so no additional development can occur. Council agreed. The second parcel is a lot on Orchard Mesa with a sewer main through it. He said Habitat for Humanity has some interest but the sewer main is deep and will be costly to relocate. Mr. Relph advised that Habitat for Humanity could possibly find assistance in moving the line. Mr. Arnold said Habitat would have to provide an easement on the south side. Council was in favor of that.

Councilmember Palmer asked how many other properties have not been discussed. Mr. Relph said he has copies of the list of properties and that he has marked off those that have been discussed. Mr. Relph said he will have staff reevaluate those that have no restrictions. Mr. Relph said once the Riverside Parkway Project is complete, there will be a number of remnants that can also be included on the list.

Councilmember Spehar inquired about properties identified for park purposes. Mr. Shaver replied it will depend on how it is being tracked.

Action Summary: After review of these City properties, Council is in favor of looking further into a possible trade with BLM of the 120 acres, continue discussions with parties in interest of the Little Park property, look to “banking” the Hutto sewer lagoon as wetlands for possible credit during the Big Pipe Project, conveying the property north of I-70 to the Airport, returning the Monument Village open space back to the HOA, pursuing development of the RFP for the steam plant, work with the DDA pursuing development possibilities for the 3rd and Main Street parking lot in conjunction with evaluating the need for it to stay as parking, donate the Webster property and the Orchard Mesa property to Habitat for Humanity, convey the other Hutto lagoon property to Michael Queally and re-evaluating the rest of the list of City properties.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.