

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE REPORT

August 4, 2010

8:30-10:00 am

140 West Pine Street

Members Present: Marilyn Marler (chair), Pam Walzer, Bob Jaffe, Renee Mitchell, Ed Childers, Jon Wilkins, Lyn Hellegaard, Dave Strohmaier and Roy Houseman

Members Absent: Dick Haines, Stacy Rye

Others Present: Morgan Valliant, Donna Gaukler, Linda McCarthy, Ellen Buchanan, Kent Watson

I. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

A. Approve minutes.

Minutes of July 21, 2010 were approved as submitted.

II. FINAL CONSIDERATION AGENDA ITEMS

III. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS –

1. Resolution to adopt the Missoula Conservation Lands Management Plan establishing the goals and guiding principles for the management of the City of Missoula's open space lands. (memo) (Cons) (Returned from Council floor: 07/26/2010) (**REMOVE FROM AGENDA**)

MOTION: The committee recommends Council adopt a Resolution adopting the Missoula Conservation Lands Management Plan establishing the goals and guiding principles for the management of the City of Missoula's open space lands.

Marilyn Marler: the public hearing was held on July 26, 2010 and there was limited public discussion. Council members did have a few items they wanted to review before voting on the final draft. Morgan Valliant has provided a summary of the changes and I would like to have a motion today to recommend approval of the plan.

Dave – I met with Morgan and Donna on my issues and Morgan has included those as well in his summary. (Notes)

Morgan reviewed the individual changes to the document; several were just minor grammar or spelling corrections and acreage correction. (summary of changes)

- Chapter 1 there was more language added to how a major change in the plan is defined as well as the process.
- Chapter 3 – added detail to goal 3, now 3.2 expand to include addition language to minimize the long term adverse impacts to native habitats.
- Chapter 4 - added 4.2 – language to develop appropriate management plans, fire, wildlife, weeds and recreation with adjacent landowners.
- On Page 65 – added two other weedy invaders to the list. Marilyn noted a typo on page 65.
- Chapter 6 – revised language to say park department resources rather than personnel should be expanded over time.

Dave – I agree with this change as there should be collaboration with OPG on grant writing and this new language leaves the process more open ended and gives an opportunity to work with other departments when appropriate rather than adding new staff.

- New Section 6.4.1.4 - Fire management includes new paragraph – Parks and Recreation department should work with appropriate agencies to develop a fire management plan that addresses both fire use and wildfire suppression. The goal of this plan should include methods, tools and response, and prevention strategies that maintain native habitats and protect adjacent private property

There was a brief discussion on Marilyn Marler's request to delete the second to last paragraph on page 54 regarding research as it relates to human and dogs impact on conservation lands. The

committee and staff agreed to this change and it will be included as part of the summary of changes.

Dave – I would like to thank staff and all the individuals that participated in the plan process. It has been one of my goals to see this accomplished as we need a map for managing our valued conservation lands in Missoula. Even though I would like to see more specificity as it related to dogs on conservation lands, I would like to move to approve the resolution adopting the Conservation Lands plan as amended.

Marilyn – I would agree with Dave and the discussion is probably more appropriate in dealing with animal control ordinance.

All members voted in favor of the motion.

IV. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS –

1. Caras Park Improvements and Fundraising Campaign. ([memo](#))—Regular Agenda (Kathy Mehring) (Referred to committee: 08/02/10) (**Informational – Remove from Agenda**)

Linda McCarthy (Missoula Downtown Association) and Kent Watson (MDA Board) presented the committee with an information item on proposed Caras Park improvements and update on strategy to implement the improvements. ([presentation](#))

Caras Park was built in 1986, with the first pavilion a brown and white Circus tent. Then in 1990, the blue and white ten and band shell were purchased. The permanent white fabric pavilion was installed in 1997 creating a permanent structure. Funding for this project came from several sources include Tax increment financing, private contributions and MDA.

Today's Caras Park Pavilion is home to more than 75 events per year and includes many series, festivals along with weddings picnics, and concerts. MDA has continue to work on making improvements to the park including the Caras Park River Overlook, Higgins Bridge Stairs, Restroom and storage expansion and new mobile stage.

The Park is in a strategic location downtown along the river, is inexpensive to rent, accessible with lots of parking and well maintained and managed. Due to several inadequate or outdate systems MDA is proposing to phase in improvements. Phase One will include building a permanent stage with vehicle ramp, replacing the band shell with seasonal awning, new electrical and irrigation systems in the event ring. The cost for Phase One is estimated at \$160,000.

Phase Two will include replacement and improvements to the pavilion walls, installation of a sound system and paint thing the steel structure. Other improvements for the future would be to replace the pavilion canopy, improve access from the Higgins Bridges well as access to the river, improve the pavilion floor, expand green space and relocate surface parking to structures parking.

MDA has formed a 501C3 Foundation that allows for tax deduction for contributories and is required for some grant applications. Fund raising will include finding contributors at several levels as well as grants and contributions by MDA and or the City of Missoula.

The committee discussed the footprint of the new stage and how it related to the master plan for the park. Linda and her staff have spent time gathering surveys from bands, entertainers on stage options and optimal use. Kent Watson thanked MDA for all their work on the proposed project.

V. NON-AGENDA ITEMS

VI. HELD AND ONGOING AGENDA ITEMS - PER COMMITTEE CHAIR – Marilyn Marler

- A. Appoint one member to the position of a Conservation Sector representative to the Greenhouse Gas & Energy Conservation Team for the term starting August 1, 2010, and ending on July 31, 2013. ([memo](#))—Regular Agenda (Marty Rehbein) (Referred to committee: 08/02/10)

ADJOURNMENT - The meeting adjourned at 9:30 am.