

OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
ABBREVIATED MINUTES  
August 9th, 2012  
4:00 – 6:00 pm

<b>Present:</b>	Jed Little	Jenny Tollefson	<b>Absent:</b>
	Tim Aldrich	Adam Liljeblad	Mary Manning
	Bert Lindler	Gabe Millar	Matt Barnes
	Jeff Stevens	Gary Knudsen	
	Ethel MacDonald	Beth Hahn, Park Brd Rep	

Also Present: Jackie Corday, Open Space Program Mgr & Jim Habeck

**Field Trip to National Wildlife Federation Property Along Grant Creek Trail**

Background info from Jackie given to members before going on the fieldtrip:

At the end of 2010, with the help of the Grant Creek Trail Association (GCTA) and Territorial Landworks Inc. (TLI), Dave Shaw and I had successfully completed acquisition of all 8 trail easements needed to construct the approximately 3 mile bike/ped trail along Grant Creek Road, including over a 1/4 mile easement from the National Wildlife Federation (NWF) along their 26 acre property. Approximately \$90,000 was used out of the \$170,000 Open Space Bond funds approved in 2008 to acquire the trail. The remainder of the funds are planned to be used for "cost to cure" items, such as moving landowner fences and irrigation systems prior to construction of the trail.

Then, in early 2011, the former owners of the NWF property who had donated the land to NWF, disputed the right of NWF to grant the easement to the City as they alleged it was in violation of the restrictive covenants that require the land to be managed for birds and wildlife. They threatened to sue NWF and the City if we moved forward with trail construction. Our first approach was to try to discuss with them their concerns and see if we could address them. After many months of not making satisfactory progress with that, we decided it was best to have TLI prepare a feasibility analysis for 3 different route options from the perspective of cost, safety, traffic impacts, winter maintenance, and aesthetics. Route 1 is the original route that we obtained an easement for from NWF – it crosses Grant Creek from the Prospect Meadows common area and then heads east to meet up with the toe of the slope along the road. Route 2 does the same thing, except it puts the trail within the right-of-way of Grant Creek Road instead of at the toe of the slope on NWF property. Route 3 is completely within the road right-of-way from Prospect Drive until past the NWF property.

That study was completed in the fall of 2011 and it established two important facts: 1) Route 3 would cost approximately \$300,000 more to construct due mainly to the need to move utilities and to construct tall retaining walls along the east side in order to make enough room for the trail and car lanes and 2) Route 3 would provide only a 2' separation from the car lane to the trail for a significant portion of the distance, making it very undesirable from a safety perspective and use during the winter as plowed snow would go right onto the trail. Thus, we now knew for sure it was critical to somehow work out an agreement with the former owners of the NWF property.

Almost another year later, thanks to the Mayor and key individuals working for Washington Corporation, a settlement has almost been reached that will allow the trail to be placed through the NWF property adjacent to Grant Creek Road. The terms of the agreement require the City to purchase the property from NWF and manage the property for its conservation values, which will be achieved by a land management agreement with the Washington Corporation – they will essentially extend their ranch management operations to include this additional 26 acres. The trail would be allowed on the very eastern edge of the property adjacent to Grant Creek Road (the same locale as in the NWF easement granted in 2010). The \$40,000 purchase price was determined by NWF. No appraisal has been done in recent years, but at about \$1,500/acre, it is within the price range we have previously paid for open space. The goal is to hopefully have all the settlement documents approved and signed and complete the public process for approving the

purchase of the property by late October/early November. Then Dave can go to work over the winter on preparing the RFP for trail construction in the spring of 2013.

Bert is heavily involved with the GCTA and has spent countless hours making this trail happen, and thus he recused himself from voting on this project.

Fieldtrip - We first stopped at the NWF property to see the proposed location of the trail. Members were able to see the lack of any shoulder along the road. We also observed the legal speed limit of 45 mph appears to be exceeded often, which is why the trail is so important to provide a safe place for bicyclists and pedestrians.

Our next stop was the intersection of Starwood and Grant Creek Road, about 2 miles up the valley and across from Dirk Visser's property. When constructing his house in 2010, he offered to construct a segment of the trail adjacent to his property and his neighbor's to the north (almost 1,500'). He did in fact construct the base of the trail and GCTA was successful in obtaining a Recreational Trails Program grant from FWP to pay for the asphalt.

A question arose in regards to whether or not the trail will be plowed. Jackie checked with Donna and found out that it will be plowed, but the trails within the urban core will take priority and be plowed first.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 pm with the next meeting date scheduled for 4:00–6:00pm on August 9th at Currents.