

OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
ABBREVIATED MINUTES

April 9th, 2009  
4:00 – 6:00 pm

**Present:**

Tim Aldrich  
Mary Manning  
Karen Knudsen  
Jeff Stevens  
Adam Liljeblad  
Bob Clark  
Ethel MacDonald  
Ginny Fay, Park Board Rep  
Peter Bugoni  
Maureen Hartman

**Absent:**

Jed Little  
Gerhard Knudsen

Also Present: Jackie Corday, Open Space Program Mgr, Dave Shaw, Parks & Trails Design Mgr, Morgan Valliant, Conservation lands Mgr, Pelah Hoyt (FVLT), Jim Berkey (TNC) & Jim Habeck

**Trail Updates From Dave Shaw**

Dave began by showing members the Bicycle Commuter Network (BNC) that has been established thus far in Missoula, which is a system of bike/ped trails separated from roads (Milwaukee & Bitterroot Spur), bike lanes, and designated bike routes. He pointed out the gaps that we're working on to fill, such as the Milwaukee between Russell and Reserve and east of Kim Williams Trail and the Bitterroot Spur near the Southgate Mall. Ethel mentioned that west of the South Avenue and Reserve Street intersection is very dangerous – there is no bike lane or sidewalk the last half block approaching the intersection.

Grant Creek Trail – Dave mentioned the bike trail route surveying is now complete so now it's time to negotiate terms on the remaining easements that need to be obtained. Two HOAs still need to go through the voting process to approve donating the trail easements through their common area. NWF has expressed concern about the trail going along the wildlife refuge. Dave is working on ways to mitigate their concerns. All utilities, including gas, sewer, and phone are on the east side of the road so the goal is to keep the trail on the west side and avoid crossing back and forth.

Rails to Trails 2010 Campaign and Transportation for America Coalition – Dave mentioned the R2T \$50,000,000 proposal that was submitted last year for Missoula, which included a long list of additions to the BNC that could be made if we received such funding.

Milwaukee – East and West

Dave gave quick updates on our Russell to Reserve work, which is going slowly but surely. We should have more info to share by July.

**The Nature Conservancy East Jumbo Proposal - Jim Berkey**

Jim explained the basics about the Montana Legacy Project, which involves purchasing approximately 310,000 acres for \$490,000,000 from Plum Creek primarily in Missoula County. Two phases have

already closed so far that total about 240,000. TNC is looking to sell 1000's of acres to the Forest Service and other local, state, and federal land management agencies as was their intention from the beginning of the project. The last phase left includes some land near French Town, the upper Swan Valley, and west of Lake Inez. A good website to review news about the whole project is: <http://www.themontanalegacyproject.org/index.html>

Jim is requesting OSAC to consider recommending purchase of ~216 acres located adjacent to the City's Mt Jumbo open space on the east side of the mountain in Marshall Canyon. The eastern Boundary would be Marshall Canyon Road. It is mostly steep timbered hillside with one gravel logging road. Jim said TNC will likely obtain an appraisal soon so that a price could be discussed. He mentioned that public entities can receive a lower sales price than private entities.

Prior to the OSAC meeting, Morgan and Jackie discussed the potential purchase from a land management perspective. Morgan said it makes sense for the City to own and manage the land. Elk closure and weed management would be easier to manage. Morgan said the weeds are bad along the road and the City actually has more money to manage conservation lands on a per acre basis than the FS. The logging road is already used by many cyclists who ride up it and over Mt. Jumbo along the Saddle Road.

Jim Habeck said that the property appears to present a fire hazard as the trees are fairly dense. He suggested it should be thinned, to which Morgan agreed.

#### **Appointment of new Chair**

Members unanimously voted for Tim to be the new chair and for Ethel to continue on as Vice-Chair.

#### **Other Updates Announced**

- 1) April 16<sup>th</sup> Transportation for America – affordable housing webinar;
- 2) April 23 – Political and Practical Solutions for Businesses to Climate Change;
- 3) April 28<sup>th</sup> – Bike Walk Bus Week Event – Discussion on Improving Active & Public Transportation Opportunities by Reforming Federal Transportation Funding;
- 4) May OLAC meeting in place of the regular OSAC meeting that will not be held in May.

The meeting adjourned at 5:45 pm with the next meeting date scheduled for 3:30 – 5:00 on Thursday, June 11<sup>th</sup> at Currents.