

MINUTES OF MEETING

Parks, Open Space and Trails Advisory Board – December 9, 2020

MEMBERS PRESENT: Hilarie Engle, Chuck Vertrees,

MEMBERS PRESENT VIA WEBEX: Helen Carter, Kari Kostka, Emily Reaves, Chris Miller

ABSENT: Scott Frey

STAFF PRESENT: Mike Edwards, Scott Koberg, Candy Hahlbeck

OTHER: Brent Moore (Development Services) (Via WebEx), Commissioner Patrick Malloy (Via WebEx)

INTRODUCTION:

K. Kostka called the meeting to order at 12:06 p.m. No conflicts of interest were declared by Advisory Board members.

H. Carter moved to approve the November 28th minutes. Hilarie Engle 2nd. Motion passed.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

Nothing to report.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

S. Koberg updated the Board on the Barber Park Pathways & Parking project. Our Department was put in an awkward position with the way Development Services processed our Master Facility Plan application by not allowing us to do the outreach we intended. Unprompted, Development Services sent out a notice, without our knowledge, to neighbors near Barber Park. This letter got us cross ways with a lot of our constituents who we have worked with for years to gain their support. S. Koberg is going to summarize where we are today with the project.

The modified Master Facilities Plan originally had 7 total plan areas. This application has since been withdrawn. A Modified Site Plan will now be submitted for 5 areas. S. Koberg presented a PowerPoint highlighting the proposed plans for these 5 areas.

Plan 2a is an asphalt path near the Event Center. The proposal is the same exact path in concrete with ADA access to handicapped stalls.

Plan area 2b is to connect the sidewalk near the office and kiosk using concrete. The sidewalk is the same width and no mature vegetation will need to be removed for this project.

Area 3 is referred to the Barber Park Plaza near the Beach House and Snack Shack area. This area contains failing, aged out asphalt trails. The proposal will open the space up to additional gathering areas and green space creating consistent flow of pedestrians from the parking areas to the beach and the drop off circle to the river. This also includes an access path to the restrooms. Concrete will be used for the paths.

Area 4 is the space just before you make a right into the drop off circle and adjacent to area 3. The asphalt path will be removed, and a concrete path will be installed.

Areas 5 & 6 are located in the Inner Loop Forest. Upgrades will include replacing existing bridges with railings for safer access. There is a pathway that leads to the fishing pier that was removed after the flood in 2017. The asphalt will be removed along with the speed bumps and parking stalls. It will be replaced with a product called Stalok that is currently used in Glacier National Park. It is an ADA compliant surface and more appropriate for use in a natural environment. The fishing pier will be replaced. The County Engineer is currently working on the design drawing.

K. Kostka confirmed that this new application does not include paving to the parking field for overflow parking. S. Koberg responded that this was correct. He went on to say that there is already an approved application on file with Development Services that proposed 68 parking stalls in a sensitive

habitat area with a pathway through this area, a new restroom and a shelter. This application was approved several years ago. K. Kostka added that what S. Koberg has outlined here makes a lot of sense and that it's difficult to push a stroller through the Inner Loop Forrest Trail. H. Carter added that the plan looks great. She added that this issue is popping up on her social media page in Eagle. She inquired if there is anything the Board members can do to redirect people's ire? S. Koberg responded that they can emphasize with anyone they interact with that the application isn't even on the table and that it has been withdrawn. We will be conducting outreach for the new Modified Site Plan application.

E. Reaves commented that S. Koberg has done a great job accommodating the questions and concerns that came up. She went on to say that she didn't receive one of these notifications, but that she was notified within several hours of other receiving their letters. She went on to ask if there has been any outreach on social media? S. Koberg responded that that no, no additional outreach had been done as of now.

Ridge to Rivers. Special Uses Guidelines Draft Revision is currently being undertaken by the partnership. Currently, there is a Special Uses Guideline Packet that refers to races and vending within the Ridge to River Trail System. There is a draft revision that will be discussed as a partnership tomorrow with a proposed inclusion of virtual events. The primary reason for this is the Boise Trails Challenge and the volume of users this brought to the trails system and created some conflict with habitat degradation or a vibe that doesn't coincide with the Happy Trails campaign for the Foothills. S. Koberg is seeking initial reactions for communication with the partnership tomorrow. K. Kostka asked for clarification if the revision to the Special Uses Guidelines would expand to virtual events? S. Koberg responded that was correct, but being the way the Special Uses Guidelines are right now it would potentially kill any virtual events that are planned because there are specific trail areas that are proposed for use in this Special Use Guidelines. Any virtual event would have to get approval from each affected partner for these events. In addition, they may need additional permits from the agencies. C. Miller added that as a participant there is a lot of value to the community. Like minded people are able to form bonds over this event. It's also an opportunity for people to get out and explore the Foothills and visit an area they may not have known existed. There are also some issues that need to be addressed. There needs to be a limit on how many virtual events there can be. At a minimum there needs to be a mechanism to limit both the number of events and number of participants. C. Miller would hate to see the idea of virtual events killed but perhaps there is a solution that will help control the growth before it becomes out of control.

H. Carter has not participated in these virtual events but has considered it. She thinks the virtual events are compelling and an interesting way to get out there during COVID. She wonders if there is a way to strike some middle ground when it comes to virtual events, our constituents, and the amount of pressure our natural resources are under.

C. Vertrees comments parallel C. Millers. He has completed the Boise Trails Challenge for 3 years. It is a good event that builds trail knowledge and mentality of more than just the casual user that didn't realize the extent of the trail network and even what Ridge to Rivers is. He thinks it does a lot of benefit to build the community. This year, the challenge was 30 days and there was quite heavy trail use during that time. There needs to be a structure and limits. Another aspect that C. Vertrees brought to the attention of the folks that run the Boise Trails Challenge is that SWIMBA is a non-profit. The Trails Challenges is a for profit endeavor. He thinks it's something to consider when it comes to how many for-profit events are allowed on public land. If you are a for-profit event, do you have a charitable contribution to the event?

E. Reaves asked for clarification-this wouldn't be a ban on virtual events, it would just be the same approval process for non-virtual events. C. Miller responded that non-virtual events are currently banned below the Foothills and there are roughly 4 running races that are allowed and that's it. S. Koberg responded that this was correct. Mountain Bike racing is nearly banned in terms of organized mountain bike racing. The exemption is the upper Foothills trails where they are associated with Bogus Basin and Forest Service permitting. There are specific trails called out where mountain bike races will be contemplated. The review and approval process requires any race of any sort that the

application be submitted during a two month period during the year prior, November 1st -December 31st if the race is planned for June 2021. Some specific running races that have been around for a long time have been grandfathered in. The virtual proposal also includes limiting the number of participants. The virtual mountain bike partition only includes those trails that are part of the mountain biking guidelines. The running portion, as proposed, would limit participants to 100 per day for the length of the event.

E. Reaves went on say that the virtual events have really taken hold. The events she has been involved with have been really successful. We are going to see this continue and we will likely see in person events with virtual components moving forward. This isn't just a pandemic situation. We should have guidelines for process of these events.

C. Vertrees added that on a day to day basis the negative impact on the trails was probably more from group events such as hiking and biking where 30-40 people show up on a Thursday at 5PM. The more responsible groups have learned their lesson over the last 5-10 years that those are very negatively impacting. He went on to say that Ridge to Rivers has a bit of a PR battle they are consistently fighting negative comments.

H. Engle added that she agrees with what C. Vertrees said. She has put on a lot of events and there are many hoops to jump through. One thing she would like to see is who is responsible for cleanup and making sure things are better than they found it. Just last week there was a running race through Bethine Church and they left their flour marks and glow sticks all over the trail. People that walk the trail ended up cleaning up after them. There should be some mechanism for someone going back and making sure those areas are better than they found it.

OPEN SPACE AND TRAILS COORDINATOR REPORT:

M. Edwards supplied an update on his activities.

Oregon Trail projects include working on installing signage including new kiosks and maps, install pit toilet, work with BLM on EA for trail re-route and trail armoring, install wagon wheels near entrance signage.

Hubbard projects include writing Hubbard Reservoir Park Improvements Plan and work with the Idaho Department of Lands on lease agreement and proposed improvements, work with Advisory Board Hubbard subcommittee.

Bike Park projects include clean drains following rain events until ground freezes.

Dry Creek Ranch projects includes continue working on trail easement and write RTP grant to pay for trail development.

C. Miller added that his wife was happy to see the new toilet that was installed. He was also happy to see the new trail signs. He said the farther he was from the parking lot, the less signs there were. He inquired if more signs would be going up. M. Edwards responded that he was hoping to get more signs up. He has started putting additional signs on the BLM portions. He met with David from BLM. He was supposed to get some BLM stickers for the carsonite signs, but the stickers wouldn't work. M. Edwards wants to get a map board up on the Columbia Rd. side. The current map doesn't have a BLM sticker on it. He is going to try and make sure BLM understands that they need to have their stickers on the map and carsonite sign so trail users understand this partnership.

ADJOURNMENT

K. Kostka adjourned the meeting at 1:11 p.m.