BE A GOOD STEWARD: Protect & Respect your Parks, Trails & Recreation Facilities

Call Meeting to Order: Jessica MacMillan called the meeting to order 5:38 pm.

Agenda Review & Items of Note: None

Citizen Participation: None

Approval of Minutes: Discussion: None
Bruce Henderson made the motion to approve the Parks & Recreation Board minutes of July 22, 2015, seconded by Mary Carlson – Minutes approved 9:0.

Meeting Summary

- Karen Manci, Senior Environmental Planner, presented the P&R Board with a draft of the Core Natural Areas Management Plan. This is the first management plan written for the Core Natural Areas. The Core Natural Areas group currently includes eight sites managed by Natural Areas: Red Fox Meadows, Fisher, Ross, Mallard’s Nest, the Coterie, Redwing Marsh, Evergreen West Pond and Dry Creek Basin. The purpose of the Core Natural Areas Management Plan is to:
  1. Develop overarching goals for managing Core natural areas.
  2. Document the site history and current management of eight core sites.
  3. Solicit input from the public on future management of the City’s Core natural areas.
  4. Provide a tool to help coordinate site management among City departments.
  5. State site management objectives for the next ten years and describe any strategies or actions necessary to achieve those objectives.

- Clark Mapes, City Planner, presented the new Downtown Plan to the Board. The new Downtown Plan will update the vision, policy direction, and action items for the next 10-20 years. The plan adoption is scheduled for July 2016. Currently, the top 5 emerging priorities related to Downtown Management included: Continued emphasis on beautification and cleanliness; addressing the needs of the homeless population; investigate ways to reduce negative behaviors, balance the number and scale of downtown events “event fatigue”; and maintain a sense of safety and family friendliness. There were additional priorities in Art & Culture, Energy & Environment, Market & Economy, Transportation & Parking and Urban Design.

- The no-smoking ordinance in Parks, Recreation Facilities and along Trails takes effect on September 1, 2015.
AGENDA ITEMS:

Draft Core Natural Areas Management Plan – Karen Manci
The City of Fort Collins Natural Areas Department currently manages 43 natural areas in size from 1-acre to 22,258-acres. Although management plans have been written for local natural areas within the Poudre River, Fossil Creek and Foothills corridors, this is the first management plan written for the Core Natural Areas. The Core Natural Areas group currently includes six sites managed by Natural Areas and opened to the public: two in the Utility Canal Importation Stormwater Basin (Red Fox Meadows and Fisher), three in the Spring Creek Basin (Ross, Mallard’s Nest and the Coterie), and one within the Dry Creek Basin (Redwing Marsh). There are also two additional sites that will open to the public within the next 10 years included in the Plan (Evergreen West Pond and Dry Creek Basin).

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An open house was held on August 13 at Nix Farm Natural Areas Facility. Only about a dozen people attended, but there were over 2,000 invitations mailed in addition to press releases, information on the website, posters in kiosks and social media posts as well as emails sent to stakeholders. In order to give people an opportunity for input, the draft plan and an online comment form will be available on the City’s website until September 15.

Discussion
Board – Do you think CSU Hughes Stadium site will become a natural area or park in the future?
Staff – Probably not.

Downtown Plan – Clark Mapes
The first Downtown Plan was adopted in 1989 and served as a guide for 25+ years. Its focus was on revitalizing and shaping downtown as it exists today. The new Downtown Plan will update the vision, policy direction, and action items for the next 10-20 years. In addition, the new Downtown Plan will incorporate additional planning efforts and studies such as the Poudre River Downtown Master Plan, the Pedestrian Plan and the Bicycle Master Plan. When it’s completed it will serve as the overarching policy document guiding private development and public investment in the downtown area. In addition, the boundary expanded to include commercial areas and reduce overlap with subarea plans.

There are 5 Phases to the Plan Adoption. Phase 1 of the process is complete and Identified Issues. Phase 2 of the process is also completed and focused on the New Vision (response to the issues and public engagement driven). We are currently in Phase 3 – Choices & Strategies; followed by Phase 4 Document Development first quarter of 2016 with Phase 5 Implementation & Plan Adoption by July 2016.

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Discussion
Board – Has there been any talk about the outdoor eating areas?
Staff – The Plan will speak to encroachment issues.
Board – Is there plans to resurface the sidewalks?
Staff – That is an on-going process. Many of the sidewalks have been recently repaired.
Board – Will there continue to be center street parking?
Staff – Nothing is changing with center street parking that I’m aware of, but those are transportation and parking issues which another team was focusing on.
Board – The bike racks at Mugs give the feeling of “sticking out” into the lane of traffic. I would like to see a dedicated area of bike parking and not the use of parking spaces for bike racks.
Board – Why does Parks maintain downtown?
Staff – It was a process that grew through the years because City Management liked the way Parks Maintenance worked.

10-Minute Break
P&R Board members presented JR Schnelzer with a card and gift card as well as a cake to say goodbye and wish JR a happy retirement.

STAFF UPDATES

Parks Updates
- JR thanked Board for the card and well wishes.
- No smoking ordinance will go into effect September 1 for Parks & Trials. Signs are being placed at the entry signs of the parks and in kiosks. Currently enforcement will be through peer pressure only.
- Jefferson Park and Oak Street Plaza Park will convert to no smoking in January when the Downtown core no smoking ordinance goes into effect.
- The Gardens on Spring Creek is now part of Cultural Services. Being a part of Cultural Services made more sense with the types of programing the Gardens offers.

Recreation Updates
- Steve Budner & Peggy Bowers will both be retiring in November. Peggy’s last day is November 1 and Steve’s last day is November 20.
- Mass registration was on August 6 and 71% registered using WebTrac
- The Senior Center is in the process to be Re-accredited with the goal to have all the information turned in by November 1.
- The Foothills Activity Center is moving along, still anticipating December as the opening timeframe.

Park Planning Updates
- The new lights are up at the Northside Aztlan skate park. They are no-bleed lights so they don’t interfere with the neighborhood or wildlife along the Poudre River; and would not be able to be turned on after 11:00pm. There was a “light up the skate park” event and it was well attended.
- City staff has acquired two of the Vine Drive properties north of the Poudre River Downtown Project site to provide additional space for project elements. Predesign is being coordinated with the US Corps of Engineers and Colorado Parks and Wildlife.
- Design of the Southeast Community Park has reached 75% completion. Park Planning has contracted with a special playground company, Cre8Play, to help design custom play items for the playground which will integrate play into the "Play Barn" and the two Silos from the Timberline Road Project.
- The new section of the Poudre Trail at Arapaho Bend was placed in July along the east side of Rigden Reservoir and across the Arapaho Bend Natural Area. The remaining concrete trail should be completed by the end of August, and the project should be completed by September, 2015.
- The partnership and collaboration between Natural Areas, Parks, Park Planning, & Stormwater is the reason we have such a great trail system.

Discussion
- Board – Where are you at with the Poudre Trail east to I-25?
  Staff – We had a meeting with CDOT and they are moving forward with their design of I-25 by Fort Collins, it’s not a priority but moving higher on their list. The design looks like it would be better for a trail bridge.
- Board – What about the refresh project for City Park?
  Staff – We have a few rough designs and are looking to so some outreach this fall.

Board Work Plan Items
No Updates.
**Bicycle Advisory Board Liaison Update**
The BAC is looking for volunteers to do the bike counts on trails.

**Schedule of Articles/Calendar**
An article is due on September 24 for the winter addition of the Recreator which will come out in November. The Board decided to write an article on the Foothills Activity Center and Mary Carlson will write the article.

**Bullet Points**
- Karen Manci presented the Natural Areas Core Plan draft to the Board.
- Clark Mapes presented the Downtown Plan Update to the Board and gathered their feedback.
- The no-smoking ordinance at Parks and along Trails will go into effect on September 1.
- Happy Retirement to JR Schnelzer, Director of Parks.

**Adjournment**: Meeting adjourned 7:53 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Rankin

Board Approved Minutes 9/23/15 - 6:0.

**Board Attendance**
**Board Members**: Ragan Adams, Mary Carlson, Brian Carroll, Bruce Henderson, Kenneth Layton, Jessica MacMillan, Scott Sinn, Kelly Smith, Dawn Theis
**Staff**: Bob Adams, JR Schnelzer, Mike Calhoon, Kurt Friesen, Carol Rankin, Steve Lukowski, Karen Manci, Clark Mapes
**Guest**: None