

**MINUTES
CITY OF FORT COLLINS
LAND CONSERVATION & STEWARDSHIP BOARD**

**Regular Meeting
Executive Session
August 10, 2016
1745 Hoffman Mill Road
6:00 p.m.**

Council Liaison:
Gerry Horak 420-7398

For Reference:
Kent Leier, Chair 631-2361
Marcia Mallory-Patton, VC 222-0513
Trudy Haines, Communications 225-2760
Mark Sears, Staff Liaison 416-2096

Board Members Present: Vicky McLane, Marcia Patton-Mallory, Raymond Watts, Kelly Ohlson, Joe Piesman, Trudy Haines, David Tweedale, Edward Reifsnyder

Excused: Kent Leier

NAD Staff: Tawnya Ernst, Mark Sears, John Stokes, Justin Scharton

Public Attendees:

Call meeting to order: 5:30 pm

Introductions: None

Public Comments: None

Approval of Minutes: Marcia asked that the acronym P&S agreement mentioned in the July minutes be completely spelled out, to reflect Purchase and Sale agreement. Michelle Vattano made the correction and the minutes were signed by Marcia Patton-Mallory, Vice Chair, on behalf of Kent Leier, Chair.

Vicky McLane made a motion to approve the July LCSB minutes with the recommended changes by Marcia Patton-Mallory.

Raymond Watts seconded the motion.

The motion was unanimously approved.

David Tweedale made a motion that City Council approve the IGA with Larimer County to implement the Horsetooth Foothills Land Conservation Project. This is exactly the kind of partnership at the City, the County and GOCO level that the city should engage in for future land conservation.

Vicky McLane seconded the motion.

The motion was unanimously approved.

Nature in the City Update

Justin Scharton, Senior Environmental Planner made a brief presentation on the implementation phase of Nature in the City and provided a program update. Justin explained that Phase I started in Planning back in 2014. An assessment was done to find out why nature access was important for economic, social and environmental reasons. An analysis of that assessment was done, which has led into Phase II where we have partnered with City Planning staff and others. Over the last 8 months implementation of projects have begun.

Major program goal is to have everyone, within Fort Collins, within a 10 minute walk to nature from home or office without having to cross an arterial street. Justin explained survey results demonstrated that we are already at a 60%-70% coverage. Justin demonstrated the gap areas on a map where focus needs to be given. Various variables play a role for example at Fossil Creek Wetlands. It is further away than 10 minutes but there is a water barrier that doesn't allow that rule to apply, so those types of things will definitely play a role in those assessments. Justin explained how NIC has partnered with the City Planning to combine important wildlife and access priorities and determine what would be high priority acquisitions opportunities. This also helps planning during the development review process.

There have been several meetings with Tawnya Ernst and Mark Sears to discuss medium and high end land conservation priorities that would include NIC goals. Justin went on the give examples of a handful of NIC projects already in the planning stages. Exciting to know that many volunteers have come together to complete the bird and butterfly surreys, logging in over 200 hours, including researchers with CSU, for bee monitoring. All the survey data and information will then be fed into the Wildlife Connectivity Analysis, which we will run again this fall to provide a third year of data.

With the Land Conservation and Stewardship Board being the primary board for Nature in the City, Justin committed to giving quarterly reports to both City Council and the LCSB, and presenting before the board a couple of times a year to provide progress reports.

- Some board members are concerned that future funding for NIC projects would be imposed by City Council that the funding the NIC is not very sustainable from the general fund.
- John reminded members that partnerships with other departments are a positive note.
- Trudy felt it worthy to identify other funding sources for future projects, like Utilities.
- John encouraged everyone to look at the NIC Strategic Plan; he felt that the work NIC is doing is definitely in line with that Plan.
- 2016 NIC Capital Budget is \$200,000. \$100,000 is proposed to fund the SE Community Park “Creek play area.”

Longview Trail – Proposed Trail Alignment –

Mark Sears, Natural Areas Manager and Greg Oakes, Landscape Architect – Mark introduced Greg Oakes, with City Planning Department, who has been with Parks Planning for about 6 months. Prior to that, Greg was a landscape architecture consultant, for the last fifteen years. Mark has brought this proposed trail alignment to the board a few times over the last couple of years during the planning stages. He explained the partnership between City of Loveland, City of Fort Collins and Larimer County. The partnership received two \$1M dollar grants through the Transportation Alternative Program and GOCO. The County is taking the lead on the project, they were the ones who went out and got the grants. Park’s is the lead on the design aspect, as they have the staff that can manage the design consultant. They hired one consultant to design the entire trail. Mark and Greg showed a sketch from the engineering drawings to give an idea of where the new trail would align and discussed some issues of concern. Construction will start August of 2017 and be completed in 2018.

Mark reviewed the proposed trail alignment with the board, starting in Loveland, going north to show the trail alignment and potential issues. Some suggestions from the board were to move the trail further away from the irrigation canal at the south end of the trail, and work at making the irrigation canal a little more natural and maybe improve the habitat. Greg mentioned that Larimer County has been open to making alignment changes on the trail and there could potentially be opportunities to make the trail meander more. The board made some suggestions for the trail that included safety and better user experience.

Discussion/Issues:

- Larger buffer area near the irrigation canal allowing for more habitat preservation.
- Make the trail meander more and consider adding natural features to improve the user experience.
- Across from Gully’s Greenhouse, just north of Trilby, there is a large wetland area. Board members felt the best idea was to bring the trail through the wetland versus moving the trail along Shields where there is a safety concern and potential road expansion for the future.

- Attending board members felt we should stay with the preliminary recommendation and insist that a business and site plan be done.

Kelly made a motion to send a follow up memo to CC outlining our current position on the sale portion of Running Deer Natural Area and outline various topics that should be addressed in their master plan study.

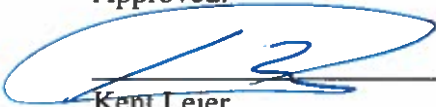

Edward Reifsnyder seconded the motion

The motion was unanimously approved

Trudy agreed to work on the memorandum with Mark and John's help on the specific language.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Approved:

 _____, Chair 9/14/16 Date
Kent Leier
 _____, Secretary