

Minutes of the Parks, Trails & Recreation Commission
City of Cherry Hills Village, Colorado
Thursday, May 14, 2009
at the Village Center

Commission members in attendance: Theresa Gilpatrick, Ann Gallagher, Bill Callison, Jane Soderberg, Heidi Schmidt Hammell. Employees present: Jay Goldie, Bill Bauer and Pamela Broyles.

Absent: James Fairbairn
Klasina VanderWerf

Call to Order

Ms. Theresa Gilpatrick called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Approval of April 9, 2009 Minutes

Ms. Jane Soderberg moved to approve the April 9, 2009 minutes. Ms. Ann Gallagher seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Audience Participation

No audience participation

“Dog off Leash Park” Presentation

Matt Clark
4666 Heartwood Way
Castle Rock, CO 80109

Mr. Clark reported that he is the owner of “Top Dog” training. He stated that he is here to offer any assistance and to answer questions regarding the planning of the off leash dog park. Mr. Clark stated that he is familiar with training dogs for temperament, anger and things that go along with an off leash dog park. Mr. Clark stated it is important to issue permits to ensure that dogs are behaviorally sound, friendly and educated in dog etiquette in terms of respecting other people’s space and other dog’s space. Mr. Clark reported that he is also willing to assist Cherry Hills Village with the off leash dog license permits if they are interested. Mr. Clark reported that he has been a dog trainer for 15 years and he has trained several dogs in Cherry Hills Village and Greenwood Village.

Mr. Callison referred to a comment that was made stating that off leash dog parks are a minimum of 30 minutes away from Cherry Hills Village and asked Mr. Clark if this information is correct.

Mr. Clark described the off leash dog park locations that are near Cherry Hills Village.

Ms. Schmidt Hammell asked Mr. Clark to describe what amenities are needed for a dog park.

Mr. Clark stated that it would be important to provide shade, a drinking facility, and adequate space.

Ms. Soderberg stated that finding the space would be difficult because areas in the Village are dedicated to different purposes such as equestrian and recreational parks.

Ms. Schmidt Hammell asked Mr. Clark how many dog parks have a significant amount of healthy grass that is maintained.

Mr. Clark explained that most dog parks have wild grass versus field grass and the amount of healthy grass is determined by the size of the dog park. He stated that one approach is to divide the park into two areas and rotate back and forth.

Ms. Gilpatrick reported that she is concerned that the City does not have adequate space. She stated that John Meade Park was mentioned as a possible location, but with the horse arena in John Meade Park that is used frequently, she would be reluctant to make a recommendation to have dogs in the same area for safety reasons.

Mr. Clark stated that in terms of community relations a dog park is a productive way to bring communities together. He added that a lot of his clients who live in Cherry Hills Village said they would frequent the dog park on a regular basis.

Ms. Schmidt Hammell reported that the majority of houses in Cherry Hills Village have adequate sized lots that allow dogs to run free and get exercise. Ms. Schmidt Hammell believes that with all of the walking trails available in the City it is important that dogs are kept on a leash because the trails are also being used by equestrians and bikes.

Ms. Soderberg expressed concern that until the South Suburban issue is settled, the Village is a public space that everyone and anyone can use.

Ms. Helen Freemyer
7 Parkway Drive
Cherry Hills Village, CO

Ms. Freemyer submitted a letter to the PTR Commission asking the Commission to consider adding an off leash dog park in Cherry Hills Village. Ms. Freemyer stated that she has lived in Cherry Hills Village her entire life and has watched the Village change dramatically with space being used for development. Ms. Freemyer started walking her dog at Kent Denver because she has a disorder from a previous accident that prevents her from being able to hold onto a leash. Ms. Freemyer stated that she has already talked with Kent Denver about opening an area in the lower field for a dog park. Ms. Freemyer asked if there was a park that could alternate hours of operation to accommodate dogs and horses and she also recommended selling passes to help cover the cost of bags and cleanup. If there is not a space available for a dog park Ms. Freemyer asked if the Commission would consider designating a portion of the bridle path where dogs can be off leash.

Mr. Callison reported that he does not think it is a good idea to start charging people to use Cherry Hills Village Parks for any reason.

Ms. Freemyer stated that citizens are willing to pay for a pass in order to have a place for their dogs to be off leash.

Subcommittee Discussions

Parks, Trails and Recreation Enhancement

Three Pond Park Ponds - Discussion by City Council Member Alex Brown

Mr. Brown reported that over the years the Denver Water Board's policy on the High Line Canal water flow has changed impacting the availability of water that is maintained for wetlands and ponds. He has observed that the ponds are drying up and although the marsh area seems to be surviving it is also challenged. Mr. Brown reported that his long term concern is that the loss of water on a regular basis may adversely impact the wetlands area that is very much a feature of Three Pond Park. Mr. Brown mentioned that one possible strategy might be to take the storm drainage water that comes out of the

Mansfield area and is currently being discharged in the highline canal and reroute the water into the pond itself. He stated that he did speak with Denver Water and they are interested in getting storm drainage out of the highline canal, but there are also issues with downstream users and changing the historic flow. Mr. Brown stated that he is not a wetlands expert and does not understand all of the engineering. He asked if the PTR Commission would consider recommending the engagement of a wetlands expert to provide some ideas and strategies on how to deal with the changing environment. He is requesting that the City seek an expert to gain advice on a long term strategy for maintenance of the wetlands area in the Village, but particularly Three Ponds Park since that area seems to be at risk.

Ms. Schmidt Hammell encouraged the Commission to place this recommendation on their priority list and move forward in the near future.

Mr. Brown reported that he was surprised to hear a few weeks ago that there are fish in one of the ponds, which provides an opportunity to enhance the habitat as well.

Mr. Callison recommended that this topic be one of the PTR Commission's highest priorities.

Ms. Soderberg recommended that the PTR Commission consider this project for next year's budget.

Mr. Goldie told the Commission that the City will add the recommendation to the budget for 2010.

Ms. Gilpatrick also requested that the subject be placed on the summary sheet.

Mr. Brown thanked the PTR Commission for considering his request.

Summary Sheet Review

Ms. Heidi Schmidt Hammell requested that the completion of the John Meade Park Horse Arena be added to the Summary Sheet Review under, "Maintenance."

Ms. Gilpatrick requested that the Mooney Trail Discussion and the Commission's decision not to recommend moving the trail be updated on the Summary Sheet Review.

Mr. Callison asked if the Commission could add thistle eradication to the Summary Sheet Review as a priority, particularly on the Woodie Hollow Trail.

Mr. Goldie stated that the City does not regularly spray the City's trails and fields because of the cost involved, manpower needed and the environmental outcry. Staff does pull weeds and they will spot spray in areas that are excessive. Mr. Goldie will have staff spray for weeds starting at the end of South Vine and continue on to the Woodie Hollow Trail at the suggestion of Mr. Callison.

Mansfield Trail Discussion

Mr. Berninzoni included a memo in the PTRC meeting packets regarding the recommendation to City Council on the proposed Mansfield Trail.

Mr. Goldie stated that Mr. Berninzoni wants to make sure that he has everyone's thoughts written down correctly before making this recommendation. The project will be presented in phases with Phase I consisting of the painted white stripes on Mansfield Avenue and requesting feedback from the neighbors on whether the stripes are working.

Mr. Berninzoni would like to start with less expensive solutions and apply for grants before moving forward with Phase II. Phase II would add a winding trail on the north side that would run the entire length of Mansfield with tree plantings. Phase II will only move forward if Phase I does not satisfy neighbors concerns.

Ms. Gilpatrick asked Commission members if they are comfortable with the verbiage that Mr. Berninzoni has proposed in his memo to be presented to City Council.

Ms. Soderberg asked if the white stripes are going to be painted in the near future.

Mr. Goldie responded that he is waiting to hear back from Denver Water regarding the status of a waterline on Mansfield Avenue. He may have to postpone the asphalt until this waterline is complete. If the asphalt moves forward they will paint the stripes right away.

Mr. Goldie informed Commission members that he is presenting a recommendation to City Council in June to ask them to consider adding a sidewalk at the intersection of Mansfield and Dahlia to provide safety for pedestrians to get past the island.

Ms. Schmidt Hammell stated that she likes the idea, but she is concerned that the City will continue the sidewalk all the way down Mansfield Avenue in the future.

Mr. Goldie stated that the City will clarify upfront the reasons for the sidewalk and it will be made clear that the City will not continue the sidewalk the length of Mansfield Avenue.

Ms. Gilpatrick clarified for the record that the PTR Commission is comfortable with Mr. Berninzoni presenting to City Council the proposed exhibits for the Mansfield Avenue Trail as it is presented in his memo.

Bench Donation: Merle Chambers

Ms. Merle Chambers donated \$6,000.00 to the City to be used for a bench donation and to plant trees at Three Pond Park. Mr. Goldie reported that the City would like to start planting the trees early next week.

MS. HEIDI SCHMIDT HAMMELL MOVED TO APPROVE THE BENCH AND TREE DONATION FROM MERLE CHAMBERS AND TO ACCEPT THE \$6,000 DONATION TO THE GIFT FUND FOR THIS PURPOSE. MS. ANN GALLAGHER SECONDED THE MOTION AND THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Recreation and Events Subcommittee

Ms. Gilpatrick thanked City Staff for their work on the Earth Week event.

Communications/PR

Ms. Gallagher reported that she brought her third grade class to the City's Arbor Day tree planting celebration at John Meade Park.

Trails Expansion Committee

Ms. Gilpatrick reported that she met with Jane Soderberg and Ann Gallagher to design a five year plan for the Trails Expansion Committee. The document demonstrates a theme plan of prioritized trail projects. Ms. Gilpatrick asked Commission members to review the plan and it will be discussed in more detail at the June meeting.

Ms. Soderberg recommended that the plan be prioritized for the budget list this fall.

the Trails Expansion Committee will meet to prioritize the list for the 2010 budget and will contact Pamela Broyles with the meeting information so she can post it.

Reports

Maintenance Log Update

Mr. Goldie reported that the Parks crew is tagging trees in the Village and prioritizing for removal and trimming work.

City Council Report

There was nothing to report on this subject.

New Business

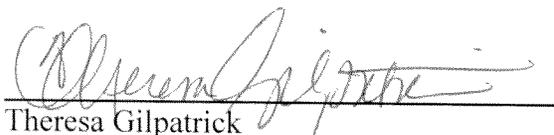
Ms. Gilpatrick reported that as a matter of public record she regrets to announce that Ms. Heidi Schmidt Hammel is leaving the PTR Commission. Mr. Gilpatrick reported that the Commission appreciates Ms. Schmidt Hammell's dedication to her district and the community. Ms. Gilpatrick thanked Ms. Schmidt Hammell for all she has done for the parks and trails in the Village.

Ms. Schmidt Hammell reported that serving on the PTR Commission has been a great experience that she has enjoyed. She encouraged the Commission to be mindful of the equestrian community and to continue to gain knowledge in order to respond to some of the horse issues.

Ms. Schmidt Hammell reported that she would like the Commission to consider replacing the two rail fence around Three Pond Park with a three rail fence to address the safety concern with horses running onto Colorado Boulevard.

Adjournment

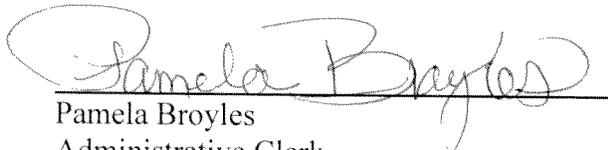
The meeting adjourned at 7:22 p.m.



Theresa Gilpatrick
Committee Chair



Ryan Berninzoni
PTR Administrator



Pamela Broyles
Administrative Clerk