

Minutes of the Parks, Trails & Recreation Commission  
City of Cherry Hills Village, Colorado  
Thursday, February 10, 2011  
at the Village Center

Commission members in attendance: Jane Soderberg, Ann Gallagher, Katy Brown, Jim Fairbairn, Jeff Ferrell, Karen Barsch, Councilmember Klasina VanderWerf. Employees present: Ryan Berninzoni, Parks, Trails and Recreation Administrator, Bill Bauer, Parks Crew Chief and Pamela Broyles, Administrative Assistant.

Absent: William Callison

**CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Jane Soderberg called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

There was no audience participation.

**PUBLIC INPUT MEETING**

**POTENTIAL PARK IMPROVEMENT AT DAHLIA HOLLOW PARK**

Mr. Ryan Berninzoni welcomed residents and provided a brief history of the potential park improvements at Dahlia Hollow Park. He stated that the Parks, Trails and Recreation Commission (PTRC) began discussions in early 2010 and after a public input meeting in March 2010 determined the criteria needed before the play structure could be considered. The criteria included a natural rustic feel, rural in appearance, located in a densely populated area and accessible by police and staff. Staff presented a final proposal to the PTRC at the October 2010 meeting. The proposal includes two play rock structures rustic in appearance with one stone bench to be located at Dahlia Hollow Park in a section that measures 43 feet by 43 feet on the northwest section of the park. Mr. Berninzoni added that if the improvement is recommended by the PTRC and approved by City Council, staff will perform the installation of the rocks and bench as well as any modifications needed for the park improvement.

Mr. Berninzoni concluded that staff would like to make it clear to both the PTRC and residents that this evening's proposal is only to gain a final understanding of what the next step should be. The PTRC will review the public input comments and make a decision on whether to stop discussions and not make a recommendation for the park improvements or make a recommendation to City Council to proceed with the park improvements. Mr. Berninzoni explained that final approval will come in the form of a vote from City Council on whether to move forward.

Ms. Soberberg thanked the residents for coming and opened the public input meeting.

Mr. Jim Manning  
4193 South Dahlia  
Cherry Hills Village

Mr. Manning reported that his neighbor put together a program that is being presented this evening, but he wanted to voice his opposition to any additions to Dahlia Hollow Park.

Ms. Klasina VanderWerf  
5250 East Chenango  
Cherry Hills Village

Ms. VanderWerf reported that although she serves on the City Council and she is a liaison to the Parks Commission she would like to speak this evening as a Cherry Hills Village citizen with over 15 years of experience as a public servant striving to make the Village a good place to live. Ms. VanderWerf commended the PTRC for their work on the proposed Dahlia Hollow Park improvements and for representing the public's interest, which she said can be difficult at times. She commended the PTRC for responding to families who have asked for a place for their children to play. Ms. VanderWerf went on to say that the Commission has helped to create an opportunity for the community to come together as neighbors and she thanked the Parks Commission for working to create a place where friends and neighbors can meet. Ms. VanderWerf also thanked the Commission for being good listeners. She said she spoke with neighbors who attended the public hearing in March who described the hearing as being equally divided. She referred to some of the comments that were made by residents who asked that the equipment fit in with the surroundings and that the area not distract from the path to the High Line Canal. She thanked the Commission for representing the public's interests so well.

Bill Klingensmith  
4720 East Oxford Avenue  
Cherry Hills Village

Mr. Klingensmith reported that he would first like to acknowledge that the Parks Commission are volunteers who have worked hard and have done a number of good things for Cherry Hills Village, but in their attempt to citify the parks and playgrounds they have strayed far from the Mission Statement. Mr. Klingensmith reported that he lives adjacent to Dahlia Hollow Park and he believes the Commission has ignored the tradition of keeping the parks natural. Mr. Klingensmith stated that it is useful to look at the history of this issue and in the mid 1980s there was discussion on placing a playground, tennis courts and a parking lot in the park, but neighbors spoke loud and clear that their preference was to keep the park as a natural playground of open space. Mr. Klingensmith went on to report that playgrounds were introduced again in 1989 and 1991 and each time the majority of Village residents were against the idea and the projects were not pursued. Mr. Klingensmith referred to the survey conducted by the Blue Ribbon Panel to learn about the communities priorities and when asked, "What are the most pressing needs and issues affecting open space, trails, parks and recreation" he said the most votes were for "Preservation, acquisition, protection and rural atmosphere." Mr. Klingensmith reported that despite a long history of residents around Dahlia Hollow Park and in the Village as a whole clearly expressing a majority opinion in favor of keeping the parks natural, he was dismayed to recently find a public notice at the entrance to Dahlia Hollow Park and a letter from the Parks Commission by mail. Mr. Klingensmith referred to statements in the PTRC meeting minutes since the March public input meeting and he believes the Commission is trying to advance a project that may be popular with the Commission, but is unpopular with the majority of residents. Mr. Klingensmith did note that some parents with young children like the idea of playground equipment in parks, but he believes the vast majority do not. Mr. Klingensmith stated that he is in favor of children, young mothers, playgrounds and promoting community spirit and every child should have a playground, but every child as well as every adult should have access to open natural spaces. He indicated that Cherry Hills Village is fortunate to have both playgrounds in the back yard and natural spaces in the parks. Mr. Klingensmith stated that his family enjoys taking walks at Dahlia Hollow Park in a preserved natural space. Mr. Klingensmith concluded that by putting playgrounds in our natural parks, we violate the tradition and the Village's mission statement. He urged the Parks Commission and City Council to uphold the tradition and to preserve the appearance and peaceful atmosphere of Dahlia Hollow Park.

Parks & Trails Commission  
02/10/11

Georgeanna Klingensmith  
4720 East Oxford Avenue  
Cherry Hills Village

Ms. Klingensmith reported that she is a pediatrician and she loves children. She stated that their family feels privileged to have a property in the Cherry Hills Village Master Plan. She indicated that Cherry Hills Village is a unique semi-rural environment close to Denver and that is why they live in the Village. She stated that her children and grandchildren enjoyed the natural environment, playing along the High Line Canal, exploring and using their imagination. She said they have priceless memories growing up in Cherry Hills Village in a natural environment. Ms. Klingensmith indicated that she enjoys walking and viewing the wildlife and they enjoy watching others who are walking, jogging, riding horses, bike riding and talking with each other. She indicated that it is not a lonely place and people do gather at the park. She believes adding a six foot high plastic rock will not be an enhancement to the open space and trails in Dahlia Hollow Park. Ms. Klingensmith indicated that the park is a small open space and was designed to add access to the High Line Trail. She indicated that the park would be better served by spending money on additional trees and shrubbery to enhance the ruralness of the park rather than plastic rocks. Ms. Klingensmith also discussed the concern of liability and the financial burden if not carefully examined and also cautioned about the risk of flooding during downpours.

Ruth Herman  
4070 South Hudson Way  
Cherry Hills Village

Ms. Herman reported that she has lived in the Village for 30 years. She said they love living here and they did not move here so that children could get playgrounds, but they moved here for the natural feeling. She stated that we live in a place that is becoming more and more rare. Ms. Herman indicated that she is a retired biology teacher and believes that children appreciate silence and there is too much noise in this world. Ms. Herman indicated that the feeling she gets when she walks with her husband is something that needs to be preserved. She added that she appreciates the work the Commission has done, but she feels like the Commission is saying we can improve your house and do it better and I don't want your improvements. She suggested planting trees instead.

Harriett Manning  
4193 South Dahlia  
Cherry Hills Village

Ms. Manning reported that she is in support of everything that Mr. Klingensmith spoke about. She indicated that she has lived in Cherry Hills Village for 48 years and was the first to have a house in that area. She stated that her kids grew up catching frogs and did not need playground equipment. She stressed that she is very much against the proposed project.

Ann Polumbus  
4001 South Dexter Street  
Cherry Hills Village

Ms. Polumbus reported that she believes Dahlia Hollow Park is a marvelous place for a park for a lot of reasons. She stated there are so many young families and she walks through the park all the time and sees lots of moms and kids and older people. Ms. Polumbus provided the Commission with a brochure on natural rocks that illustrate art as well as play equipment.

Ms. Soderberg thanked all the speakers for coming and assured them that the Commission listens to public input. She confirmed that the Commission will discuss their comments extensively including additional input that is received via emails and letters.

Ms. Soderberg closed the public input meeting.

#### **APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 13, 2011 MINUTES**

Ms. Katy Brown moved to approve the January 13, 2011 minutes with approved corrections. Ms. Ann Gallagher seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

#### **SUBCOMMITTEE DISCUSSIONS**

##### **a. Summary Sheet**

##### Trail Enhancement Update

Mr. Ferrell reported that on January 20, 2011 he together with Jim Fairbairn and Ryan Berninzoni met with the property owners located on the corner of Stanford Avenue and Downing along the proposed Stanford Avenue Trail. Mr. Ferrell indicated that they are receptive to the idea of designating a trail through the Stanford Avenue roadway, but they voiced one concern in that they want to find out how granting an easement adjacent to their property might affect the setbacks. They also indicated that they use a section of the roadway for access for some of their service people. The property owners could not give a definitive answer at this time. Mr. Ferrell reported that they have a meeting next week with another property owner and he will provide an update at the next PTRC meeting.

Mr. Ferrell reported that he made a phone call to the lawyer who represented the owner of the former St. Clair property. Mr. Ferrell said they have identified the individual that controls the LLC, but he is not sure if they reside on the property. The attorney agreed to contact the individual, but he has not heard back from him yet.

Mr. Fairbairn asked Mr. Berninzoni if the City has a formal tree watering plan in place with documentation that the City can follow for new trees in future years.

Mr. Berninzoni responded that the City has a simple form that they follow for new trees, but they do not have rain sensors. He stated that staff does water all new trees once a month.

Mr. Fairbairn asked if a document could be created so there is a plan in place that future staff can easily follow.

Mr. Berninzoni responded that staff is on that path and should have something in place within a year. He stated that the City has an aged tree inventory and staff is working on a better inventory list to work off of.

Mr. Fairbairn stated that he is also concerned that a lot of research was put into the tags that were placed on the trees and they are falling off. He would like to see the trees replaced with a more permanent tag.

Ms. Soderberg asked about the status of the GPS System that was budgeted for last year.

Mr. Berninzoni responded that they have been unable to find an intern to work the GPS system because it takes an extended amount of time and they need someone who is trained on the equipment and software.

Mr. Fairbairn requested that tree maintenance and an intern for the GPS system be added to the next meeting agenda for further discussion. Mr. Fairbairn expressed that he would like to see the following programs in place:

1. Secure a GPS system
2. Create a long term program to ensure that trees are getting watered consistently.
3. Replace tags that are falling off the trees with permanent tags.
4. Make sure that young trees are being properly taken care of.

Mr. Berninzoni responded that Bill Bauer, the Parks Crew Chief, will be presenting the annual maintenance report at the next meeting and he will address all of these issues.

Ms. Soderberg stated that these items will be added to the agenda for the March 2011 meeting.

#### Special Events Update

Ms. Brown reported that the Special Events Committee met recently and set the date of June 11, 2011 for the Equestrian event and August 27, 2011 for the movie night. Ms. Brown thanked Ms. Lucinda Greene for her work in getting teams together for the equestrian relay race.

Ms. Brown reported that plans for the Exotic Car Show are moving forward and they are tentatively planning the event for October 2, 2011. They have reached out to several clubs and they are anticipating 30-50 cars for the show. The priority is finding a location to hold the event.

#### Website and Signage

There was nothing to report on this subject.

#### Communications/Crier Article - Ann Gallagher

Ms. Gallagher stated that she is open to suggestions on what people would like to see and read about in the Crier. She said she used to write a short article in the crier regarding the trails, but she feels that residents are already familiar with the trails so she stopped writing the articles.

Ms. Barsch responded that she enjoyed reading the articles that Ms. Gallagher wrote on the trails and encouraged her to continue.

#### General Updates

There was nothing to report on this subject.

#### **b. Parks, Trails and Recreation Enhancement**

Ms. Soderberg reported that she met with Mr. Vogel who is working with the Calkins property to walk the trail through Cherry Hills Park. Ms. Soderberg was able to demonstrate how the trail meandered through properties with great vistas.

### **REPORTS**

#### City Council Report

Councilmember VanderWerf asked Mr. Berninzoni if the City applied for the Arapahoe County Open Space Grant.

Mr. Berninzoni responded that the City did not apply for a grant this year.

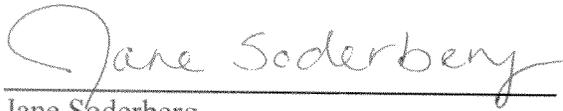
Councilmember VanderWerf pointed out that the Arapahoe County Open Space Grant will come up for vote in 2013 to determine if the open space grant will continue in future years. She reminded the Commission that each municipality is eligible for up to two grants up to \$250,000. Ms. VanderWerf stated that there may be an opportunity to use grant money for improvements to John Meade Park. She emphasized that it is important to think about possible GOCO and Arapahoe County Open Space grants now.

Councilmember VanderWerf commended the PTRC for all of their hard work.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

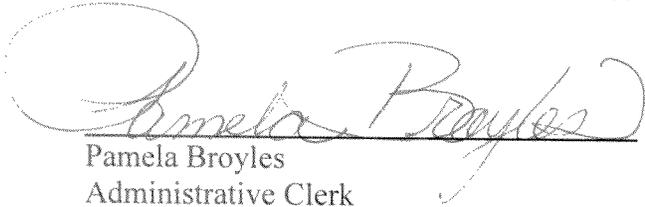
The next scheduled PTRC meeting is March 10, 2011



Jane Soderberg  
Committee Chairperson



Ryan Berninzoni  
Parks, Trails and Recreation Administrator



Pamela Broyles  
Administrative Clerk