

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of the
Parks, Trails & Recreation Commission of the
City of Cherry Hills Village, Colorado
Held on Thursday, January 13, 2022 at 5:30 p.m.

PARKS, TRAILS AND RECREATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

Chair Stephanie Dahl called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Chair Stephanie Dahl, Vice-Chair Tory Leviton, Commissioners Robert Eber and Kate Murphy. Also present were Emily Black, Parks and Recreation Coordinator, Jeff Roberts, Parks Operations Supervisor and Pamela Broyles, Administrative Assistant.

Absent: Commissioners Fred Wolfe, Chelsea Scott, and Aron Grodinsky

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

There was no audience participation.

CONSENT AGENDA

Vice-Chair Tory Leviton moved, seconded by Commissioner Robert Eber to approve the following items on the Consent Agenda:

- a. Approval of Minutes – November 11, 2021

The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

- a. High Line Canal Conservancy Bench Program – by Harriet LaMair

Harriett LaMair, Executive Director of the High Line Canal Conservancy introduced the plan that the Conservancy has been working on with regard to benches along the High Line Canal. She reported that the Conservancy did an inventory of the existing benches along the entire Canal and determined that the recommended frequency for future benches is approximately one bench every quarter mile. She said they also looked at areas where people would like to have more benches for gathering and to experience beautiful views. The Conservancy presented their analysis to the Task Team to get feedback from local jurisdictions on their desires for the management of benches. She confirmed that Denver Water has given the Conservancy the authority to manage benches along the High Line Canal. She expressed that as a nonprofit organization the bench program will be an important part of ongoing revenues.

Director LaMair referred to Cherry Hills Village and noted that the City has generally adopted stone benches as the standard bench. She said the Conservancy is also recommending that Cherry Hills Village consider wood benches to unify the use of the benches in different jurisdictions. She shared that they chose wood benches with backs because people prefer backs for comfort. She described the wood as being a sustainable natural wood. She said they are also looking at seating boulders in addition to wood benches to provide a natural option that requires no maintenance. A plaque can be embedded in the boulders.

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Director LaMair asked for feedback on the types of benches that the Conservancy is proposing. She is also seeking approval from the Commission to turn over management of the existing benches that were installed in the past along the High Line Canal to the Conservancy. She said the Conservancy will respect the names already on the benches and will reach out to the donors as the benches need repair and maintenance.

Coordinator Black noted that from City staff's perspective having the Conservancy manage all the benches along the High Line Canal makes for more consistency and continuity. She confirmed that there are 14 benches along the High Line Canal in the Cherry Hills Village jurisdiction.

Chair Dahl asked if someone wants to donate a bench or tree to remember a loved one will it be outsourced to the High Line Canal Conservancy or will the City still handle the tree donations.

Coordinator Black replied that the City will still maintain and manage all of the bench and tree donations that are not along the High Line Canal. She said the Conservancy will maintain benches specifically along the High Line Canal.

Supervisor Roberts added that the benches in the City are low maintenance. He said staff will on occasion wash bird droppings off of the benches.

Commissioner Eber commented that because the High Line Canal has a natural feel, he does not think that the wooden bench or the metal bench fit especially if there are concrete pads underneath them. He said he likes the stone benches that the City currently uses and suggested looking into stone benches with backs on them. He said he also likes the seating boulders as they are natural looking.

Director LaMair responded that there are a lot of jurisdictions along the Canal that have the wooden benches and with time they look more natural and fit in with the environment.

Vice-Chair Leviton commented that he does not think the benches need to be standardized and he likes the idea of a variety of benches. He said he also does not like the metal benches and believes the flat stone benches are not comfortable.

Director LaMair asked if the Commission likes the idea of making seating out of some of the cottonwood stumps along the Canal.

The Commission agreed that they liked the idea of using the cottonwood stumps.

Commissioner Eber also commented that he believes there are talented artists that could create a variety of benches.

Director LaMair noted that the Conservancy is in favor of some artist created benches. She said several jurisdictions are concerned about maintenance and with the Conservancy taking over the maintenance there are more options to consider. She suggested that the Conservancy could present any proposed benches along the City's section of the Canal to PTRC for feedback.

The Commission discussed pricing for benches along the Canal.

Director LaMair responded that because the Conservancy is raising money from the bench program for the entire High Line Canal, they will hold certain bench locations for large donors. She said there will be additional locations available along the Canal once the campaign is over.

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Chair Dahl asked if there is any preference given to Cherry Hills Village residents if they want to donate a bench in the City.

Director LaMair responded that the Conservancy has not addressed that question and she does not have an answer at this time.

Commissioner Eber commented that there are going to be areas that people find more attractive. He asked if the Conservancy has considered putting bench combinations close together in these areas versus a single bench.

Director LaMair responded that in spaces with more land they have considered a mini gathering spot for those areas. She said she will come back to PTRC with a more detailed plan about the locations for benches.

Commissioner Eber also mentioned that a group of benches might attract a function and he assumes the Conservancy will deal with people who want to reserve a spot and not the City.

Director LaMair responded that there are not any gathering spots recommended in Cherry Hills Village at this time. She said there are some other areas where this is being considered but the subject of reserving those spaces has not come up. She said as an organization charged with approving events on the High Line Canal any functions in the Village would be in collaboration with City staff. She suggested the gathering spots should be no more than three benches and no picnic tables have been suggested at this time.

The Committee was in favor of transferring the maintenance and upkeep of the existing benches on the Canal to the High Line Canal Conservancy.

b. Master Plan Survey Results – by Planning Manager Paul Workman

Planning Manager Paul Workman gave a presentation on the Master Plan survey results. He noted that the last Master Plan for the City was completed in 2008. The City is working with a consultant, Rick Engineering to assist with consolidating the feedback from the open house and the survey results. Rick Engineering hired a transportation engineering company as a sub-consultant to focus on traffic related issues and trail and bike connections. Mr. Workman outlined the Master Plan process:

- 2020 - Background work related to community assessment
- 2021 - Started Citizen Advisory Taskforce (CAT) meetings and open house
- 2022 – Translating information received. Working with the Planning and Zoning Commission (P&Z) who is charged with overseeing the Master Plan update process

Mr. Workman outlined the approach to getting public input:

1. Open House September 29, 2021
2. Community survey posted on the City's website and mailed to every property owner on October 15, 2021
3. CAT meeting in September 2021 and December 2021. Next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 20, 2022.
4. Technical Advisory Group – a group of stakeholders that have an interest in the Village but may not live in the Village (schools, churches, country clubs, fire districts and water districts)

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Mr. Workman reviewed the chapters for the Master Plan:

- Community Character
- Land Use
- Transportation
- Parks, Trails, and Open Space
- Infrastructure/Facilities
- Sustainability

Mr. Workman commented that based on the survey results most people like the parks and the park structure in the Village. He said they prefer passive in nature and a desire to get more connections between the parks.

Mr. Workman stated that the Master Plan process is scheduled to conclude in the fall of 2022.

Commissioner Eber commented that there is a whole chapter in the Master Plan geared towards the Parks Commission and the community is interested in continuing to have trails and expansions/connections of the trails. He observed that environmental issues came forward as being important as a result of the first outreach process.

Vice-Chair Leviton noted that the 2008 plan doesn't really talk about any kind of sustainability or being environmentally friendly. He would like to see strategies and specific goals set during the next round of public input.

Chair Dahl thanked Mr. Workman for his presentation.

REPORTS

a. Chair Report

Chair Dahl had nothing to report.

b. Commissioners

Commissioner Eber emphasized that there is still a lot of work to be done on the Master Plan and input is needed specifically on parks and trails. He said there is a significant new emphasis on environmental issues and energy sustainability and residents do not want more McMansions. He noted that open space is important and gives PTRC an opportunity to draft a strong message and to stay involved.

Commissioner Leviton agreed that it is important to keep the community semi-rural without infringing on landowner rights. He would like to see open space with natural character to keep with the Master Plan goals. He brought up that Kent Denver is the largest landowner and so much of what the Commission is talking about includes Kent since it is in the middle of the City and along the High Line Canal. He suggested it is important to have a liaison at Kent Denver to communicate and share the community's goals and values.

Commissioner Murphy emphasized that Kent Denver is a gracious neighbor in terms of sharing their open space and allowing people to walk on their property.

Coordinator Black agreed that Kent Denver has been a great partner to the City during Quincy Farm events and for the Cherry Hills Land Preserve, and that Kent Denver is involved as one of the stakeholders in the Master Plan process.

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Commissioner Murphy brought up the 36 trees that were cut down on the corner of Quincy and Franklin leaving tree stumps without any signs of building. She asked why there is not a timeline for when a property has to be developed after cutting trees down without replanting or rebuilding. She stressed the importance of having a policy for a timeline and for the size and number of trees that need to be replaced.

Coordinator Black agreed to talk with Paul Workman about the concern with the trees that were cut down and on the building process. She said she will also send the Tree Replacement Policy that is currently in place to the Commission.

c. Staff Report

i. Trail Renaming

Supervisor Roberts reported that he has been working with Commissioner Wolfe and all of the signs for the Woodie Hollow Trail have been installed. He said they are currently working on the Cherry Trail that runs from Bridle Path Lane off of University to Glenmoor.

ii. Quincy Farm

Coordinator Black reported that City Council approved the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Cherry Hills Land Preserve. She explained that based on the MOU the Cherry Hills Land Preserve will meet on a monthly basis and will put together a plan for Quincy Farm for 2023. She clarified that a plan will be completed in July of every year that will be presented to City Council for approval. She said City staff will work with the Land Preserve on budgeting and to assist with applying for grants.

iii. Tree Donation Program

Coordinator Black announced that the City is now accepting donations for trees in addition to benches and donations do not need to go through City Council for approval.

iv. Status Update – E-bikes

Coordinator Black reported that Parks staff and the Police Department will give City Council a status update about E-bikes at the February 15th Council meeting during the study session. She described the meeting as a chance to update City Council about the challenges with enforcement and discussion on speeding of all bikes on the Canal.

Commissioner Eber stated that he would like to hear what the Police have to say about the ability to meet current regulations which says no E-bikes on our trail system. He said it is a difficult enforcement issue, but the City needs to find a way to enforce it if it is going to have it. He also brought up the size of the E-bike signs and the Police concern that the signs are too small and do not adequately put people on notice so they can enforce the no E-bike requirement. He proposed that if bigger signs are needed then the Commission needs to reevaluate making the signs bigger.

Coordinator Black stated that the Police Chief will address all of these concerns at the February 15th meeting.

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ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:46 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for February 10th at 5:30 p.m.



Chair Stephanie Dahl



Emily Black
Parks and Recreation Coordinator



Pamela Broyles
Administrative Assistant