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Town of Lyons Ecology Advisory Board Meeting Notes

January 20, 2016

Members and others present: Steve Simms (Chr.), Garima Fairfax, Greg Lowell, Kurt Carlson, Fay Marshall (left at 8 p.m.); Dave Batts; Connie Sullivan (BOT); Mike Harris (Parks & Rec); Matt Manley (Town Flood Recovery); Emily Walker (potential new member)

Prior to meeting, EAB members and others introduced themselves to Walker and Manley described his responsibilities to all.

Simms began meeting at 6:45 p.m.

Motion: To approve meeting notes of December 2015; Fairfax made motion; Lowell second; all aye. Meeting notes accepted.

Marshall introduced new meeting agenda format and ran meeting to test its effectiveness.

Follow-up and discussion and review of action items:

Tree Selection for Bohn Park (Fairfax) – Fairfax said she did contact P&R Director Cosgrove with a list preferred trees for Bohn Park reconstruction, but said Cosgrove already had the list. She also asked Cosgrove to coordinate with her for proper labeling of trees in Bohn Park when they're planted.

LCF Trails Restoration Grant (Simms) – This is a grant for \$13K (money from sale of flood books by Lyons students); Lyons Community Foundation is awarding grant for some kind of trail work (as requested by students in raising the money). Marshall said she had mentioned this grant to P&R Director Cosgrove, who said town has direction and goals for trails as outlined in recent public hearings. They also have other grant monies for trails but need cash matches; this \$13K grant could serve as match for other grants. Marshall suggested letting Parks & Rec apply for and run this grant work. Manley offered to follow up with Cosgrove on application, which is due Feb. 1 to LCF. Lowell said we want to make sure this grant is used for its expressed purpose and not lost in overall trail budget; suggested that Martin and Stacy buyout properties might be candidate locations for new trails. Carlson suggested “sensory” trail and provided Manley with material on those trails.

PCDC Liaison (Lowell) – Lowell said he had contacted PCDC Chair Dave Lock and Lowell will now serve as EAB liaison to that board.

Other Items – Marshall and Sullivan explained the “take” permit that has been issued for Meadow Park golden eagles. Sullivan said work must be only for flood-related projects and that it is the only take permit issued in country for golden eagles. Fairfax talked about weed booklets that she is attempting to procure from Boulder County Cooperative Extension for an EAB summer event; some confusion on how many we can get free and Harris said he'll check with P&R admin to see if she has ordered some as well.

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New Business

a. Review of 2015 Objectives and Setting 2016 Objectives

Consensus was that EAB had met most of its 2015 objectives, except for mapping high value conservation areas in town. Carlson pointed out that much of the data we need to map these areas is being developed or is available through the flood recovery work. Batts said we might consider a goal of ensuring the ecological benefits of the river restoration work as a priority for next 1 to 5 years; this would include ensuring the plantings survive and thrive. Harris said he will check with river restoration firms on whether they are warranting their plantings for a year, in which case the EAB's focus might be on those areas not covered by the warranty. Lowell said this might not be realistic goal for 2016 given pace of restoration work but that it might be better for a 2017 goal.

Motion: Lowell made motion to continue EAB 2015 goals and strategies into 2016; Carlson seconded.

Discussion followed on promoting volunteer work and how that might be used on restoration plantings – either actual planting or maintenance. Simms said Wildlands Restoration Volunteers are ready to assist on projects and we need to determine if volunteer efforts have been described as part of overall river restoration work – how does volunteerism fit into the plan?

Consensus was that an additional strategy on volunteering was appropriate.

With addition of Strategy IV (see following), motion was approved unanimously.

The **2016 Ecology Advisory Board Goals and Strategies** are:

Goal 1: Provide opportunities for the Lyons community to learn about ecological issues relevant for the town and its natural resources.

Strategy I: Hold regular ecology focused hands-on learning opportunities.

Strategy II: Develop formal arboretum with town recognition and map

Strategy III: Write monthly ecology article in local newspaper

Strategy IV: Foster community volunteering on ecology related projects.

Goal 2: Provide valuable guidance to BOT and town employees to help maintain ecological value in town of Lyons.

Strategy I: Review all development design documents to ensure holistic ecological design.

Strategy II: Develop principles for protecting high value conservation areas & develop map of high value conservation areas in Town of Lyons

b. Arbor Day

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Marshall said she was approached by Lyons Elementary School rep about possibly combining the Arbor Day project with the Earth Day projects at the school. She said Dave Cosgrove approved so long as the spirit of Arbor Day is captured (Arbor Day activities help certify town as a Tree City USA). Marshall will work with school to determine appropriate activities. Discussion followed on whether to repeat raptor show at school every year or try to alternate with other similar presentations. Marshall also reminded that any tree planting in town should be reported to Parks & Rec admin Marissa so town can proper credit for Arbor activities.

c. Fire Department/S20 Swiftwater Rescue Facility

Manley said grant award announcement for this facility has been postponed until end of February. Sullivan pointed out that this project has not been vetted by community and if Fire Protection District gets the grant money it doesn't mean the project will be done. Unable to gauge community support at this time.

d. 2016 LRAP Goals Discussion, Jan. 29

Simms said EAB has been invited to give input on the Long Range Action Plan Jan. 29. Sullivan said her opinion was that the LRAP, which had a 3-year span, is coming to an end and that it has served its purpose. Batts said he would attend on behalf of EAB.

e. **Gardens in a Box** (remove from agenda; not funded this year.)

f. Main St. marquee planting

Simms said town staff Jacque Watson told him that EAB has responsibility for the Main St. marquee planting and upkeep. Sullivan will check with Watson to see if this is true.

g. Private Property River Restoration

Given proposed public-funded river restoration work moving forward, it was suggested that EAB, having provided information on private restoration to interested landowners, no longer promote this issue. Item to be removed from future agendas.

h. Highway 36 Eastern Corridor Plantings

McConnell/Stone Canyon stoplight work to be completed in March, said Sullivan.

i. Establish a kayaking/fisheries foundation

Simms said in conversations with interested parties that the idea of a kayaking/fishing foundation came up. Premise is that a coalition of these two interests could arrange for buying of water from Longmont to keep river levels at a point conducive for fish and for kayaking. Batts said there's a larger movement afoot through the SVCC to keep water in the river.

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Ongoing Projects

Educational Series – Fairfax said she has reserved Farmette for a spring movie. Carlson suggested “The Great Divide” – movie about Colorado water – and will provide copy to Fairfax for review and possible use. Manley suggested a water expert (Prof. Desfosses(?) from CU) as a speaker to accompany showing.

Arboretum – Fairfax said she and Marshall had started the list of trees and Carlson had provided photos of the trees to use in the descriptive booklet. They will also begin work on the Arboretum website.

Monthly Ecology article – Lowell said January article was on free-roaming cats and their negative effect on birds. Fairfax’s suggestion to write next article on plant-friendly road and walkway deicing products gained more traction when Manley reported that Lyons Public Works may suggest a program to encourage residents to use such products. Lowell will talk to Kyle at PW about the effort and perhaps use it as a basis for article.

Review Design Development Documents – No new documents to review.

Update and merge tree ordinance – Harris said he is still refining the ordinance; Carlson offered to assist in reviewing the ordinance.

5th Avenue Project – Simms showed brochures prepared by CU-Denver students that depict various options for the 5th Avenue landscaping. He will present these plans to the BOT. Consensus among members present was that Option 2 was best option.

Motion – Lowell made motion to extend the meeting by 10 minutes; Fairfax seconded; all aye.

Liaison and Subcommittee Reports

Parks & Rec – no report

BOT – no report

Botanical Gardens – Fairfax said they are awaiting buyout results for possible site for gardens.

UEB – Simms sent Stormwater Management Plan to all EAB members.

Watershed Committee – Batts said BOT is pursuing grants for upstream and downstream restoration’ the town is “sponsor” for two reaches of the river – one from Old South St. Vrain Road bridge to Bohn park and second from Highland Dam to Rte. 36 bridge. Batts said Lyon is being ranked high on all grant requests.

ECD – nothing to report

PCDC- nothing to report

SFC – no report.

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Motion to adjourn by Lowell; Fairfax second; all aye.

Meeting adjourned at 8:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Greg Lowell, EAB Recording Secretary