

Town of Lyons Ecology Advisory Board Meeting Notes

April 20, 2016

Present: Steve Simms, Greg Lowell, Fay Marshall, Garima Fairfax; Mike Harris (Parks & Rec); Coco Gordon (SFC); Matt Manley (Town of Lyons)

Simms began meeting at 6:36 p.m.

Motion: To approve meeting notes of March; Marshall made motion; Lowell second; all aye. Meeting notes accepted.

Follow-up and discussion and review of action items:

CDOT work at Black Bear Hole– Sullivan was to discuss this with town engineer; Simms reported there appears to be a general lack of awareness of town officials and BOT on this upcoming embankment work, but Board of Trustees will be updated on it at May 2 meeting. Simms said CDOT should use the SRCAP as guideline in their design.

Action Item: Simms asked Manley to see that CDOT is supplied with copy of SRCAP.

Wilderness Institute/Earth Day Celebration 4/29 – Marshall said WI was keen to have the EAB participate in the April 29 event with plant giveaways, information, etc. Marshall gave WI our regrets, saying we're not prepared. Lowell suggested that we budget next year for items to use in such events. Marshall said let's think about next year, getting a banner made for EAB. Manley said other town organizations are having banners done up and perhaps EAB can get in on that order. Manley said he had seen an example from Greenville, NC, where the organization labeled trees in town with their economic and ecological values and said perhaps we could do it here in Lyons.

Action Item: Fairfax will research "Upstate Forever" group in NC to check out the concept.

New Business:

Joder Ranch – Simms had received info on the two trail alternatives being considered to access this new City of Boulder open space and asked whether we should comment on it. Lowell explained what he knew about the two alternatives. Consensus was that it was not in our purview to weigh in on this issue.

Main St. Tree Removal – There had been rumblings about removing the honey locust near the bakery and library, Harris said the EDC is against it and he considers it a non-issue at this point. General discussion then followed on tree ordinance (in progress), protection of notable trees and possibility of maintaining a town tree farm, possibly near any proposed community gardens. Harris will stay informed on the particular tree removal issue.

Revegetation watering infrastructure – As there will be a 2-year watering period for vegetation planted during the river restoration, Simms wondered if the town could take over the infrastructure after the

initial 2-year period to continue the irrigation. There will be expenses involved and should EAB budget for the cost in future budgets?

Planet Bluegrass Replanting – Simms said he had observed the riverside revegetation at Planet Bluegrass and reported that the buffer could be wider and that there should be access points rather than allowing general access to the river, which can destroy the vegetation. Simms suggested we approach owners of both PBG and Riverbend to apprise them of benefits of larger buffer; perhaps show them the SRCAP.

Low-Flow Water Releases – Simms said he was informed by Matt Booth of St. Vrain Creek Coalition that the town has water rights to allow it to call for water releases from Button Rock in order to maintain adequate flow in the river. What water rights exactly does town hold and how can they be exercised?

Beavers – Fairfax reported on a book she recently read about beavers and their positive influence on the environment: habitat, water table, etc. She said that there were once beavers in Lyons but they had been removed by state CPW. Suggested that the subject should be part of the SRCAP and the presence of beavers in town should be promoted.

Buyout Lots – Manley said the planning for the 404 and other buyout lots will go through a public planning process. There are grant funds available to finance the process. He would like an EAB member to be part of the selection committee for a designer. Lowell volunteered to be on the committee. Simms said the SRCAP should be part of the RFP for the design firm.

Ongoing Projects

a. Ecology Focused Educational Series

Fairfax said she thought the March 18 movie, “The Great Divide,” and the guest speaker was a great success. Asked if anyone had an idea for the next movie this fall at Stonebridge Farm.

b. Arboretum Project

Fairfax said she and Ron Gosnell will be identifying more trees on Main St. and Sandstone Park. Working on adding another 20 trees to the Arboretum by next year. Will also catalogue Meadow Park trees at some point.-

c. Monthly Ecology Article

Lowell said latest article was on the Lyons Chute – part of Northern Water’s distribution system. Next article likely to be on the completed river restoration work, or on dippers (water ouzels). Lowell also mentioned he had been invited to go on a one-day tour of the Colorado-Big Thompson water system. Fairfax and Simms also expressed interest in going.

d. Review Design Documents – no report.

- e. **Update and merge tree ordinance** – no report
- f. **5th Avenue project** - Simms earlier asked Manley about coordinating this design with town-wide landscaping design.
- g. **Arbor Day/Earth Day Celebration** – Marshall showed the nine entries received so far from school children on the contest; much better response than last year. The event will be on April 29 at elementary school. Local musicians Jeff and Page will play, Marshall will speak briefly on behalf of EAB and the school Eco Club will have a presentation.

Liaison and Subcommittee Reports

Parks & Rec – Marshall said there will be a tour of Meadow Park on April 27 at 2 p.m. for those interested. Also reported some plantings in Meadow Park may be delayed.

BOT – Mike Karavas is new liaison to EAB, replacing Sullivan.

Botanical Gardens – Fairfax said the annual plant sale will be May 14-15 at Steamboat Grocery.

UEB – Simms will contact UEB chair to see if he knows anything about the water releases from Button Rock. Gordon said some of the storm water drains to the river might be converted to swales later as land becomes available.

Watershed Committee – no report.

ECD – no report

PCDC – no report.

SFC – Gordon said SFC will be holding a town cleanup and community yard sale day in May. She said Toby Russell is working the car charging station issue.

Other Business

Lowell, as part of the St. Vrain Anglers Trout Unlimited conservation committee, said he pitched the idea of funding river restoration for the reach from Bohn Park upstream to Old So. St. Vrain Road bridge and the redo of the Highland Ditch Company dam. He's looking to find the appropriate contact on town staff to discuss as the town is the "sponsor" for both reaches.

Meeting adjourned at 8:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Greg Lowell, EAB Recording Secretary