

Town of Lyons Ecology Advisory Board Meeting Notes

September 28, 2016

Present: Steve Simms, Greg Lowell, Dave Batts, Kurt Carlson, Garima Fairfax; Bryan Baer (prospective member); Mike Harris (Parks & Rec)

Simms began meeting at 6:32 p.m.

Motion: To approve meeting notes of August 10; Lowell made motion; Batts second; all aye. Meeting notes accepted.

Follow-up and discussion and review of action items:

General discussion – suggestion that the monthly Redstone Review articles be posted to the EAB town web page; Batts made suggestion that perhaps the EAB should generate a “River Page” (or similarly named) to keep public apprised on all issues affecting the river: real-time flow data, actions taken by boards and agencies, pending plans, etc. Batts said that too often the river – a vital part of the Lyons landscape – is often not noticed by residents in their everyday life. Such a page would also promote the Ecology Advisory Board. Consensus was that this was an idea worth pursuing.

Weed Booklets – Simms has written the grant application to LCF for \$1K to purchase 190 weed booklets; will submit before the Oct. 1 deadline. Lowell suggested the booklets – once purchased – should display a sticker saying they were courtesy of EAB. (Motion was made by Fairfax to submit grant application; Batts second; all aye.)

On the Trail Art – Carlson said he sent this idea to Jacque Watson; discussion followed on use of dead trees for possible sculptures (Niwot has done this). Batts suggested this effort be brought up to the Arts and Humanities Council in Lyons. Carlson will do so.

Vision Statement for South St. Vrain – Batts presented his finalized statement:

“In the economic and ecological interest of the Town of Lyons, the Lyons Ecology Advisory Board has a vision of a healthy and continuous terrestrial and aquatic habitat along the South St. Vrain Creek from the confluence in Bohn Park upstream to the US Forest Service boundary. Attainment of this vision will provide a healthy river ecosystem and an unfragmented riparian corridor; thereby contributing to the Lyons’ walking arboretum and promoting both recreational fishing and bird watching - activities that have a high economic benefit for the local economy. To achieve this vision, the Lyons Ecology Advisory Board desires that two primary objectives be included in all restoration activities of this reach of the South St. Vrain Creek: (1) To provide an unencumbered corridor of native trees and understory shrubs for bird habitat and migration; and (2) To provide fish habitat and fish passage in accordance with accepted best practices. “

Batts said he had already sent out to Boulder County vis a vis their impending work on the river restoration in the Andesite Quarry area.

Batts suggested that this vision statement be used for other efforts along the river.

Discussion about how best to showcase this and other efforts of EAB; EAB town web page is logical place for this but unsure about exposure to public on this page. Lowell suggested Facebook page, but consensus was that too often social media becomes avenue for misinformation and unwarranted criticism.

Motion: Lowell made motion, “To adopt the South St. Vrain River vision statement (dated 9/28/16) as a guiding principle for restoration and management within the watershed.” Carlson second; all aye. Motion passed.

Discussion followed on beavers and their role in the watershed – should we promote their value? Suggestion made that we should invite a local CU professor who has done research to address the EAB. Batts said that perhaps it was premature at this point to actively promote this with the current restoration work ongoing; perhaps later.

Public Input Process for Buyout Properties – Lowell said he was on committee to help select an outside firm to conduct public meetings and come up with designs for the 27 buyout properties. There were 5 bidders which were narrowed down to three, who are currently being interviewed. There is \$165K in grant money for this effort. Of particular concern is the use of the larger parcels abutting and within the Confluence neighborhood. Lowell said that there would likely be an EAB member asked to be on a design team as a consultant; he also urged Fairfax to be active in this process to promote the Botanic Garden.

New Business:

Highland Dam Redesign – Lowell said a discussion with Matt Booth, SVCC vice president, revealed that the Highland Ditch Company is now preparing to request a variance to allow the reconstructed dam to stay as is. Batts said they will be asking for a Conditional Letter of Map Amendment that will state that the current dam does not cause a rise in flood elevation.

Weed Posse – Fairfax said that audience members at the recent EAB movie showing Sept. 9 had devised a “weed posse” which meets every Friday to help eradicate weeds in the town’s public areas by cutting off seed heads. The next project will be weed control from the Black Bear Hole to the Highland Dam area. Cathy Rivers is leading the effort.

Ongoing Projects

a. Ecology Focused Educational Series

Fairfax said the film, “Fresh” drew about 30 viewers. The movie will now be available through the Lyons library. Suggestion made that perhaps the EAB could get space at the library to showcase their movies, books and other materials.

b. Arboretum Project

Fairfax said 18 new metal signs are in and she will be installing them, bringing number of signed trees to 40. Goal is to add 20 trees annually. The website is also now active.

Monthly Ecology Article

Lowell said latest article was on fish restoration; said he was disappointed that the article was shortened by half and that the part on restoration was omitted. Next article on local elk herd.

c. Review Design Documents

No new designs to review.

d. Update and merge tree ordinance

Harris said nothing new to report.

e. 5th Avenue project

Simms said he's coordinating with Matt Manley in effort to get a uniform look to this project with other Main St. landscapes.

f. October 3 BOT presentation – Simms will be presenting to the BOT Monday, Oct. 3. Batts offered suggestions on what Simms should emphasize. EAB members urged to attend; Simms will send out scheduled time of his presentation.

Liaison and Subcommittee Reports

Parks & Rec – No report.

BOT Report – No report.

Botanical Gardens – Fairfax said that if no buyout properties have been designated for a Botanic Garden by next spring, the organization will focus on the Clarifier site for the gardens.

UEB –no report.

Watershed Committee – no report.

EDC – no report

PCDC – no report.

SFC – Gordon said SFC wants to know if EAB interested in joint project on habitat.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Greg Lowell, EAB Recording Secretary