



**Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Advisory Board Virtual Meeting**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, April 11, 2024**

**Members Present:** Sarah Bryarly, Abby Simpson, Larry Bogue, Greg Thornton, Steve Harris, Amandla Atilano-Roque, Julia Sands de Melendez, Andrea Perry

**Members Absent:** Steve Lenzo

**Alternates Present:** Kimberley Sherwood, Debbie Swanson

**Alternates Absent:** Mike Sullivan

**Staff Present:** Britt Haley, Eric Becker, Kim King, Lonna Thelen, Anna Bingman, David Deitemeyer, Caroline Miller, Pat Gentile, Cheryl Godbout, John Gebhart

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**Called to Order:** Board Chair Sarah Bryarly brought the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

**Citizen Discussion**

Harvey LeCato, citizen, said that the Woodmen Trail east of Union Boulevard needs adequate signage, both to remind people to clean up dog waste, and that no motor vehicles are allowed. He said he had brought this concern to a Board member in the past previously, but nothing was done. Eric Becker, Park Maintenance and Operations Manager, provided his information to Mr. LeCato and said he would follow up with him.

Susan Lomenick, citizen, is a neighbor to Austin Bluffs Open Space. She stated that she loves the new updates following the implementation of the master plan and gave a big thank you to staff.

Matthew Hadley, citizen, is a representative of the parkour community, and invited the Board to attend a few upcoming events. Currently, most of the competitions hosted are for youth, but Mr. Hadley said he would like to see events within the adult parkour community as well. Additionally, Mr. Hadley will be representing the community at the United States Parkour Association National Championship. Board Chair Sarah Bryarly wished him good luck.

Cory Sutela, Executive Director for Medicine Wheel Trail Advocates, thanked Eric Becker and his staff for working with his organization at the Cresta Open Space, where maintenance was done on the pump track.

Genevieve Gustafson, citizen, commented on how parks are funded. She mentioned that in Washington, parks are funded through a sales tax on home sales, where the State then matches the contribution. She suggested it as a potential idea for funding with a continuous revenue source.

**Approval of Minutes – March 14, 2024 meeting minutes.**

**Motion: To approve the March 14, 2024 meeting minutes.**

1<sup>st</sup> – Greg Thornton, 2<sup>nd</sup> – Larry Bogue Approved, Unanimously, with Board member Steve Harris abstaining.

**Action Items**

**Rock Creek Mesa Land Use Plan** (Presented by Caroline Miller, Senior Program Administrator, and Jason Alwine, Landscape and Community Planner with Matrix Design)

Caroline Miller, Senior Program Administrator, and Jason Alwine, Landscape and Community Planner with Matrix Design, presented the Board with the Rock Creek Mesa Land Use Plan. The two presentations included an overview of the property; project summary and site plan; the Park Land Dedication Ordinance (PLDO); PLDO obligation to be met; vicinity map; annexation; zone change; land use plan; parks; park overall layout; conceptual park plan; Park Land Dedication; walkability; project perspective; landscape and wildlife; and finally, site photos.

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**Board Member Questions**

Board member Amandla Atilano-Roque asked if the annexation agreement is required because of the size of the annexation. Jason Alwine responded that it was required due to the requirements of the metro district.

Board member Steve Harris asked if there is a connection into Cheyenne Mountain State Park. Jason Alwine responded that there is a potential to provide a connection.

Board member Larry Bogue asked if there has been coordination with Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) on this annexation. Caroline Miller responded that CPW had been a part of the review process and was generally supportive of the plan.

Board Vice Chair Abby Simpson asked how close the existing playground and new playground will be to each other. Jason Alwine depicted on the map where the new playground would be in regards to the existing. Jason said the landowner is willing to work with the mobile home park to make sure there is access. Next, Ms. Simpson asked if community park funds stay designated for building in the area where the fees were collected from. Caroline Miller answered that there is only one community park fund, which all of the community park fees go into for construction anywhere in the City.

Board Chair Sarah Bryarly asked that when the master plan for the parks in this area come back before the Board, if the connections for both the mobile home park and State park access could be included. Jason Alwine responded, yes.

Board member Julia Sands de Melendez asked if the mobile home park is serviced by Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU), or if only the sewer line is. Jason Alwine confirmed that only the sewer line is served through CSU and an existing water district serves the community. However, when the development happens, there will be CSU connections. Next, Ms. Sands de Melendez asked if there was a plan to annex the mobile home park into the city. Jason responded that there is not a plan for that as of now.

Board member Greg Thornton asked if the 53.84 acre parcel is managed by the City. Britt Haley, Director, answered that the City owns the area, but CPW manages and operates the area. Next, Mr. Thornton requested that there not be a wall constructed between the new development and the mobile home park. Jason Alwine responded that there is currently a fence there, though final fencing will be flushed out later in more detail. Mr. Thornton asked if there is any requirement for access to the new park from the mobile home park. Jason answered that there is not, but there will be access points. Finally, Mr. Thornton asked if there are undesignated trails in the current open space. Jason Alwine said there probably are.

#### Citizen Comments

Carol Beckman, citizen, had a few comments and questions. First, she asked why the parcel was zoned R-Flex rather than PK. Caroline Miller answered that if it had been zoned PK, the City would own the parcel and be responsible for maintenance. Zoning R-Flex allows for a metro district to own and maintain the parcel. Next, Ms. Beckman commented that PLDO requires public access, and asked if this would include everything in the development, or just the park. Caroline answered that access to the park is required to be public, though she imagined that most of the development would have public access as well.

#### Board Member Discussion

There was no additional discussion at this time.

**Motion: To approve the Rock Creek Mesa Land Use Plan reflecting 5.1 acres of total park land obligation, with one metro district owned neighborhood park and fees in lieu of community parks provided to satisfy the obligation.**

1<sup>st</sup> – Steve Harris, 2<sup>nd</sup> – Amandla Atilano-Roque, Approved, Unanimously.

**Conservation Trust Fund (CTF) Supplemental Appropriation** (Presented by Kim King, Assistant Director, and Eric Becker, Park Maintenance and Operations Manager)

Kim King, Assistant Director, and Eric Becker, Park Maintenance and Operations Manager, presented the Board with the Conservation Trust Fund (CTF) Supplemental Appropriation presentation. This presentation included the new Toro mower; Palmer Park remediation; Grey Hawk Park; the funding plan summary; and finally, the proposed motion.

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**Board Member Questions**

Board member Larry Bogue noted that the total cost for the Palmer Park remediation is \$200,000, with \$100,000 coming from CTF. He asked where the other \$100,000 was coming from. Eric Becker responded that the other \$100,000 was already in the budget last year, but the cost of remediation was much higher than originally expected.

Board member Steve Harris asked if the Palmer Park structure is on park property. Eric Becker responded yes, it is located near Maizeland Road and Academy Boulevard. The home was previously used for Ranger and intern housing. Next, Mr. Harris asked what the remaining balance in the CTF fund would be. Britt Haley, Director, responded that the Department tries to keep at least 20% in the fund balance, and she felt comfortable with the use of the funds in this supplemental appropriation. Finally, Mr. Harris asked if the CTF funds are received through the lottery/Great Outdoors Colorado. Britt Haley responded, yes, these funds are allocated from lottery funds on a per capita basis.

**Citizen Discussion**

There was no citizen discussion at this time.

**Board Member Discussion**

There was no additional discussion at this time.

**Motion: To recommend to City Council approval of an ordinance for a supplemental appropriation to the Conservation Trust Fund in the amount of \$567,118 to address additional operating and capital expenditures during 2024.**

1<sup>st</sup> – Andrea Perry, 2<sup>nd</sup> – Julia Sands de Melendez, Approved, Unanimously.

**Columbaria Platting at Evergreen Cemetery** (Presented by Kim King, Assistant Director)

Kim King, Assistant Director, presented the Board with the Columbaria Platting at Evergreen Cemetery presentation. This presentation included columbaria location; columbaria examples; a summary of costs; and finally, the proposed motion.

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Board member Greg Thornton asked if each of the 295 cremations done in 2023 were in columbaria. Kim King responded some are, but not all. Mr. Thornton then asked how much room is left overall in the Cemetery. Kim answered that there are about five acres left, some of which are on the outskirts of the Cemetery. Kim added that our Cemetery Administrator, Cheryl Godbout, is exploring other opportunities for expansion.

Board member Larry Bogue asked if the eighteen niches that had already been sold are occupied. Kim King confirmed this.

Board member Amandla Atilano-Roque asked if the only cost to the Cemetery Enterprise would be installation, and if so, how much that might be. Cheryl Godbout, Cemetery Administrator, answered yes, which would just be the concrete pad. However, with fluctuating prices of materials, this could range between \$25,000 and \$40,000. Cheryl did mention that there is a chance that the church donating the columbaria may be able to cover this cost.

**Motion: To recommend to City Council the proposed ordinance for the platting of two new columbaria in Block 210 at Evergreen Cemetery.**

1<sup>st</sup> – Greg Thornton, 2<sup>nd</sup> – Larry Bogue, Approved, Unanimously.

**Blodgett Open Space Master and Management Plan** (Presented by David Deitemeyer, Senior Program Administrator)

David Deitemeyer, Senior Program Administrator, presented the Board with the Blodgett Open Space Master and Management Plan. This presentation included goals of the plan; where we are at in the process; the public engagement process; property overview; photos; site assessment – key habitat areas; Master Plan and Appendix table of contents; plan overview; wildlife corridors and trailheads; existing conditions, wildlife corridor, and existing trail network; trailheads; Woodmen Road parking; Chamberlain Trail, Park to Peak Trail, and North-South connector trail; neighborhood connections, trail hubs, and special use areas; multi-use, single-use, and directional trails; single-use hiking trails; multi-use, and mountain bike single-use and directional trails; trail loop options and connections from the North Trailhead; trail loop options and connections from the Quarry Trailhead; trail loop options and connections from the

Orchard Valley Trailhead; neighborhood connectivity goals; community vision for adjacent USFS Lands; recommended connectivity plan; integrating an adaptive management approach; adaptive management diagram; resource management; trails and recreation management; neighborhood access and trailhead management; perimeter management; regulation and policy management; implementation priorities and costs; implementation plan; and finally, the recommendations.

[Link to Agenda Packet Here](#)

#### TOPS Working Committee Liaison and Board Representative Comments

Board member Larry Bogue is a TOPS Working Committee liaison and provided his perspective on the TOPS Working Committee meeting. Mr. Bogue provided insight on the amendment the TOPS Working Committee had made to allow up to fifty-one parking spaces in the North Trailhead area through the adaptive management plan. Additionally, he stated that there had been discussion about amending the motion made at the TOPS Working Committee meeting to change the word “illegal” to “undesignated,” however, this was not supported by a majority of the Committee.

Board member Greg Thornton is a TOPS Working Committee liaison, and also provided his perspective of the TOPS Working Committee meeting. Mr. Thornton asked David Deitemeyer to clarify that there originally had been a maximum sixty parking spaces in the early master plan drafts but was cut back to fifty-one due to site constraints and then forty-one after additional planning meetings. David responded that this was correct. Mr. Thornton elaborated that the TOPS Working Committee had amended the motion to allow up to fifty-one spots due to the removal of on-street parking along Woodmen Road in the future. Next, Mr. Thornton asked David to explain the proposed trailhead parking at the Quarry Trailhead as it relates to a future mountain biking park. David reminded Mr. Thornton that the Board is only voting on approval of the presented master plan, which does not include the area in the Quarry that could potentially become a bike park in the future. He said any future planning of that area would have its own planning process. David explained that the proposed Quarry Trailhead parking would only use the currently disturbed space.

Board member Steve Harris was the Advisory Board liaison to the master plan process. Mr. Harris thanked David Deitemeyer for his tremendous work and stated that he thought the overall master planning process was well run.

#### Board Member Questions

Board member Amandla Atilano-Roque asked if the fifty-one parking space modification to the motion made at the TOPS Working Committee meeting was mainly due to changes to on-street

parking. David Deitemeyer confirmed this, since there was a concern about the need for parking once on-street parking is removed. Ms. Atilano-Roque asked if the need for additional parking is monitored. David responded that the number of spaces for the North Trailhead in Phase I is only fifteen. Staff will monitor if there is a need for additional parking. Next, Ms. Atilano-Roque asked about the proposed paragliding, and if the launch and landing zones have been decided or if there is potential to monitor the need. David answered that if the plan is approved, the potential zones would be under our purview to implement. However, through monitoring, staff can decide if they need to remove or move potential landing and launch zones.

Board member Steve Harris asked David Deitemeyer to speak about the adaptive management plan, and what the Department has discretion on versus what would require a public process. David answered that the adaptive management plan has thresholds for monitoring. If these thresholds are exceeded or there is a need for reduction, the Department can use its discretion. However, David used the need for more parking spaces than what is allotted in the plan, permanent trail closures, or if the USFS conducts a NEPA process as examples for what would require a public process.

Board member Larry Bogue asked what the size of the proposed paragliding landing zone would be. David Deitemeyer answered that it would be about the size of the conference room the meeting was taking place in at the time. The main goal for the landing zone was to find an area free of any obstructions, like utilities or signage. Next, Mr. Bogue asked, in regards to the North Trailhead, when City Traffic Engineering would remove on-street parking on Woodmen Road. David responded that Traffic Engineering would like to coincide with the Department's implementation of the fifteen space expanded parking next year. In response to this, Mr. Bogue stated that he felt it would be imperative to increase the parking to fifty-one spaces.

Board Vice Chair Abby Simpson asked if there would be restroom facilities at every trailhead. David Deitemeyer confirmed this. Next, Ms. Simpson asked if the City intends to enforce the removal of on-street parking on Woodmen Road. David answered yes, in theory. Ms. Simpson then asked if any permit is required to paraglide. David said no, however only one person is allowed to use the launch and landing zones at a time. Finally, Ms. Simpson asked where the reclamation efforts of the Pikeview Quarry stand. David responded that the earthwork should be completed this spring, with the hope that the area will be fully revegetated by the end of summer.

Board member Andrea Perry asked how thresholds for parking needs are determined. David Deitemeyer answered that staff will monitor the trailheads for variables, such as how full they are, how often they are full, and where parking is pushed to when trailhead areas are full, and how that may impact safety. Next, Ms. Perry asked how long it would take to drive between the North Trailhead and Quarry Trailhead, should someone need to park at the Quarry Trailhead if

the North Trailhead was full. David responded that it is only a three to five minute drive. Finally, in regards to gate closures, Ms. Perry asked if there would be an additional cost to add the new gates with the current closures. David answered that the only additional gate would be at the Quarry Trailhead. Eric Becker, Park Maintenance and Operations Manager, said that the current security company contracted to open and close gates had already added the potential new gate to their schedules, and there is not an additional cost since they are already servicing the property. Eric added that staff is looking into the option of automated gates, as well.

Board member Julia Sands de Melendez asked where the additional spaces would go if parking in the North Trailhead was increased to fifty-one spaces. David Deitemeyer answered that the additional spaces would be in the continuation of the already existing footprint. Parking will be frontloaded on one side. Next, Ms. Sands de Melendez asked what happens to cars that are still in the park after the gates are locked. David responded that when this scenario happens, we see a few different outcomes: people walk out of the park and leave their car in the parking lot until the gates are unlocked the next morning; non-emergency police are sometimes called to unlock the gates; or, if they are available, Park Rangers can also unlock the gates. However, the security company in charge of closing gates typically does a sweep of the park and parking areas ahead of closing the gates. Ms. Sands de Melendez then asked if there is potential for a dog-free area in the area closer to the Big Horn Sheep habitat. David answered that staff would like to wait and see if there are effects from users. In consultation with Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW), CPW did not see the need for restrictions as of now. In regards to paragliding, Ms. Sands de Melendez asked if CPW foresaw any conflict between paraglide use and the Sheep habitat. David responded that this was discussed with CPW, who saw no significant concerns, and paragliding will not be in the critical area of habitat. However, David said one of the advantages of the adaptive management plan is the ability to scale back the paragliding should there be an effect on the habitat.

Board member Greg Thornton took a moment to thank all the citizens who provided input, and suggested they continue to voice their concerns when the item goes to City Council. Ben Bolinger, Senior Attorney for the City Attorney's Office, corrected Mr. Thornton, stating that the Board is the approving body for this master plan.

Board Chair Sarah Bryarly asked if the adaptive management plan covers the entire master plan, or specific pieces. David Deitemeyer answered that the decision would be up to Department leadership. Next, Ms. Bryarly stated that parking has always been an issue system wide, and asked if parking is designated by the carrying capacity of the open space versus the need to make sure parking is accommodated. David displayed a slide listing the different parking allotments for various open spaces, and explained how the final numbers are reached. Ms. Bryarly asked if paragliding is only wind-driven, not motorized. David confirmed this, adding that paragliding is achieved with a wide fabric wing, and is meant for passive recreation. Finally,



Ms. Bryarly encouraged staff to continue communicating with adjacent homeowners to address those who may have created their own connections into the open space.

### Citizen Comments

Sarah Spiller, citizen, stated that she had signed a petition against the master plan process in favor of protecting the sensitive wildlife in the area. She urged the Board to listen to what the citizens want. Ms. Spiller stated that currently, this master plan allots for one vehicle per 1.5 acres of open space, and the initial expansion of parking presented was disingenuous. Ms. Spiller asked why no parking survey had been done, as there had been in other open spaces such as Ute Valley Park. Ms. Spiller suggested the Department use the \$7,000,000 to complete the plan to address other backlogged issues, like playgrounds.

Pat Gustafson, citizen, stated that she is an outdoor enthusiast who enjoys biking and hiking. However, she felt that there is a place for biking activity and Blodgett Open Space was not one. She reflected on time she had spent on the Appalachian Trail and its restrictions due to degradation of the land. She urged the Board to have the foresight to see that not all uses are appropriate at Blodgett.

Genevieve Gustafson, citizen, provided a fire map from the original Blodgett master plan and stated that the fire risk in Blodgett can not be mitigated. She said grass fires move much more quickly than tree and forest fires, as displayed by the Marshall Fire in Boulder or the recent grass fire on the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA). Additionally, Ms. Gustafson stated that increased recreation will push the Sheep away and cause harm to their habitat.

Cindy Huntley, citizen, is a resident near the open space, and stated that she purchased her home because she enjoys seeing the wildlife around. She stated that the wildlife in the area was there first, and thus deserve to be respected. She added that the biking focus will drive wildlife away, and the animals will lose access to necessary resources. She said increased vehicular traffic would also harm wildlife. Finally, Ms. Huntley stated that she feared the increased fire risk by bringing more people into the area.

Conrad Madey, citizen, said he is an employee of SRAM, which is a mountain bike company with a local office in Colorado Springs. Mr. Madey presented a letter of support of the proposed master plan with 153 signatures from his fellow employees. Mr. Madey emphasized that fifty of the employees who signed the letter live directly adjacent to Blodgett Open Space. Mr. Madey stated that SRAM and its employees are passionate about supporting the Department and look for ways to volunteer on various trail projects. He stated that Blodgett is a very unique open space with many opportunities for all types of users. Finally, Mr. Madey stated that properly allocating terrain for both hikers and bikers is beneficial to both groups and will help reduce future conflicts.

Dorothy Macnak, citizen, said she felt that the TOPS Working Committee disregarded studies on recreation and fire data when they recommended the plan. She said a TOPS Working Committee member suggested that the Peregrine residents were being selfish for not wanting additional recreation and visitation to the open space but felt that special user groups such as mountain bikers were selfish for wanting so many biking features in the new master plan. Ms. Macnak believed that preservation would best serve the area and announced that she had created an online petition to protect the area and the wildlife who inhabit it. She stated that the petition had only been promoted locally, and with over 700 signatures, was proof that the public input process was inadequate. She hoped that people would see Blodgett for the fragile ecosystem that it is.

Marti Harvey, citizen, has been involved in the master plan process since it began. While she was originally enthusiastic about the additional trails but felt the final presented plan favors mountain biking. Additionally, Ms. Harvey had concerns about multi-use trails and conflicts due to the narrowness of the trails. She said bikers rarely respect the rules and asked the Board to vote no on the plan.

Martin Palmas, citizen, is a representative of the Rocky Mountain Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association. He stated that he moved to Colorado Springs to participate in the training program and has been interested in the site for advanced use. He said he is working with USAFA on how they can fly safely around each other. Mr. Palmas said the potential launch sites are very unique and will help to bring visibility and accessibility to the sport.

Karrie Waite, citizen, has been a homeowner on the west side of Colorado Springs since 1985, and worked on the original Blodgett Master Plan. When the Waldo Canyon Fire occurred, Ms. Waite said she had to wait in an hour and a half of standstill traffic during the evacuation. Now, she works with United Policy Holders, who helps people through the insurance process after natural disasters and catastrophes. She asked the Board to consider the importance of a community trying to rebuild. Ms. Waite stated that it is already difficult for homeowners in the area to get insurance, or insurance prices have tripled. Additional density in the area will only continue to make these efforts even more difficult to achieve. Ms. Waite asked how urgent it is to create a mountain bike centric park in such a vulnerable area of the City. She stated that there will be an unequal amount of pressure on this open space versus others. Finally, Ms. Waite asked the Board to keep in mind the bigger picture for the overall community, and that voting no would help to rebuild some of the trust that had been lost in the process.

Carol Beckman, citizen, stated that she fully supports the master plan. Ms. Beckman stated that while she is not a mountain biker, she fully supports the need and use of bike only trails. Ms. Beckman said she understood the concerns of the neighborhood, but Blodgett was purchased with TOPS funds, which are paid for not only by residents all over the City, but visitors as well.

The master plan has to serve the entire City, not just one community. Ms. Beckman was elated to see plenty of multi-use trails in the proposed plan, too. In regard to the Bighorn Sheep, Ms. Beckman stated that the herd is large, and often migrates over to Garden of the Gods, and doesn't seem to be too worried about the people or recreation around them. Finally, Ms. Beckman reminded the Board that open space is for everyone, not just neighbors.

Susan Davies, Executive Director for TOSC, said that this master plan had been an excellent example of public process. She believed that the plan provides a good balance of the many different needs of the open space. Ms. Davies said she was happy to hear about the public process should there be any permanent trail closures in the master plan. Ms. Davies felt that there were wonderful opportunities within the trail system, with a lot of connectivity throughout. Ms. Davies understood that citizens who live near open spaces can, at times, feel proprietary. However, she reminded the Board that this open space is supported by TOPS funding, which is paid for by all citizens and visitors alike. This plan supports the needs of the overall population, Ms. Davies reiterated. Finally, she said that additional parking is a safety concern, and urged the Board to support the recommendation of the TOPS Working Committee.

Steve Swan, citizen, is an adjacent homeowner to the open space. He was dismayed to see at the October public meeting that there was an access road and restroom proposed to be put in place above his home. Mr. Swan said he took to emailing the Department and attending meetings and received many responses to his questions. He is delighted to see changes at the trailhead, as well as the adaptive management strategy. Finally, in regards to concerns about the Big Horn Sheep herd, Mr. Swan said he sees them often and they seem unaffected by human activity around them.

Katherine Czukas, citizen, asked the Board to delay this master plan for at least two years, while Plan 1A, which will redefine and rezone the Mountain Shadows and Peregrine areas, is completed. She stated that costs related to drainage and site improvements are exorbitant, and felt better, more comprehensive area planning efforts needed to be addressed first.

John Mandico, citizen, stated that he is a mountain biker who has lived in Colorado Springs for many years. After realizing that his mountain biking was potentially disrupting trails, he started to reevaluate where he is riding. Mr. Mandico said trails are everywhere, including the nearby USAFA, which everyone can access, and therefore Blodgett did not need the additional mountain biking features proposed. Finally, Mr. Mandico said he also was a resident in the area during the Waldo Canyon Fire and is not happy with the idea of encouraging more people to visit the area with increased fire risk.

Jason Simon, citizen, stated that he supports the master plan. He has lived in the area for thirty years and had a career as a professional mountain biker. He believed increased access will be good and being good trail stewards meant supporting all uses.

Allison Branigan, citizen, said she followed the process mostly online and lives in the Peregrine neighborhood. For her, fire is a big concern. She felt that special user groups were receiving special treatment, and that there was no oversight on the negative impacts the plan has. Additionally, Ms. Branigan felt many people were unaware of the process, and that the greater community did not understand the impacts this would have. Finally, Ms. Branigan asked why the master plan has to be updated when there is already one in place.

Amy Quicksall, citizen, asked the Board to look ahead to the next generation, stating that there was too much at stake to vote today. She lives below the North Trailhead and said many of her neighbors are concerned about the proposed plan. She suggested that north Blodgett could remain a hiking-only nature preserve. Ms. Quicksall urged the Board to slow down and think through the process and preserve what special elements in Blodgett are left. She believed it was easy for the Board to vote yes on a plan that isn't in their backyard. Finally, she stated that 1.5 miles of hiking-only trail is not enough, and that the potential future mountain bike park will bleed over into Blodgett and change the dynamic.

Cory Sutela, Executive Director for Medicine Wheel Trail Advocates, stated that his organization supports the plan, and the very extensive public engagement process that went with it. He believes the plan provides a good balance of conservation and recreation. Mr. Sutela did request the change of the word "illegal" to "undesigned" in the master plan, as well as language stating that any permanent changes would require a public process, including a vote from the TOPS Working Committee and Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Advisory Board.

### Board Member Discussion

Board member Steve Harris asked what is keeping staff from changing "illegal" to "undesigned" in the master plan. David Deitemeyer answered that using "illegal" gives the City clearer authority on what they will allow and consider for trails in master plans. Mr. Harris then stated that he was serving on the Advisory Board in 2001 when the original master plan was created, and that the focus for the area at that time was preservation. However, Mr. Harris said that the existing uses in the open space need to be managed, which this plan will do. He stated that he supports the plan, especially the adaptive management focus, and would support the TOPS Working Committee's recommendation for additional parking in the North Trailhead.

Board member Larry Bogue stated that he liked the use of "illegal" in the plan and thought it would be helpful to have the Department's stance on illegal trails in writing. Next, Mr. Bogue

said he liked the adaptive management plan aspect, and thinks we could look at older plans with a similar perspective. Mr. Bogue felt that the enhancements to the area make the Department good stewards of the funds and the land itself and urged staff to continue working with CPW. Mr. Bogue thanked the public for their comments over this extensive process but said he would like to see a change to the TOPS Working Committee and Parks Advisory Board process to allow citizen comments on presentation items and not just when the item will be voted on.

Board Vice Chair Abby Simpson said she would like a little more clarification on how the adaptive management plan would address parking lots specifically. Britt Haley, Director, said that the adaptive management aspect was left broad so many items may be addressed, but said she would like to have a check-in with the neighborhood to hear and understand feedback and concerns prior to any changes. Next, Ms. Simpson said she was torn on the “illegal” versus “undesigned” language change. While she understood the plan would not make everyone happy, Ms. Simpson said she believed the process was done well and the plan does a good job of meeting needs. Finally, she asked if there are two paragliding launch zones and one landing, and how it is regulated. David Deitemeyer responded that there is a higher and lower launch zone, the lower being more of a learning area. David confirmed there is one landing zone and explained some of the regulations and certifications required for paragliding.

Board member Andrea Perry thanked David Deitemeyer for his hard work, and said she believed the plan provides a good balance. Additionally, she stated that she supported the TOPS Working Committee recommendation for additional parking.

Board member Julia Sands de Melendez thanked both staff and citizens for their hard work and comments. She stated that her main concerns were wildlife and felt that they had been addressed. She stated that the Department has to be good stewards of the whole city, and not special interest groups. Ms. Sands de Melendez added that she read every citizen email that was submitted. Finally, Ms. Sand de Melendez stated that she also supported the increase in parking at the North Trailhead.

Board member Greg Thornton said he works in insurance and understood the many concerns of citizens. He said the needs of the whole area are taken into account during these planning processes. However, Mr. Thornton said he would not be supporting the proposed plan, and wondered why there was a rush to make changes.

Board Chair Sarah Bryarly stated that she was a staff member and worked on the original plan. She added that small changes can make a big, positive impact, and saw that in this process. She applauded the citizens for working with staff to make the best plan possible.

**Motion: For approval and adoption of the Blodgett Open Space Master and Management Plan as presented and to include the TOPS Working Committee modification to allow up to 51 parking spaces at the North Trailhead, where a maximum of 41 spaces were presented.**

1<sup>st</sup> – Steve Harris, 2<sup>nd</sup> – Andrea Perry, Approved, 7 to 1.

### **Presentation Items**

**Property Acquisition** (Presented by Lonna Thelen, Design and Development Manager, and David Deitemeyer, Senior Program Administrator)

Lonna Thelen, Design and Development Manager, and David Deitemeyer, Senior Program Administrator, presented the Board with a presentation on a potential property acquisition. This presentation on a potential property acquisition at 1680 South 26<sup>th</sup> Street included a map of where the property is located; details about the property; opportunities and information about the residence on the property; photos of the residence; and finally, the tentative schedule.

[Link to Agenda Packet Here](#)

### **Staff Updates**

**Water Conservation and Usage Update** (Presented by John Gebhart, Special Improvement Maintenance District Unit Administrator)

John Gebhart, Special Improvement Maintenance District Unit Administrator, presented the Board with the Water Conservation and Usage update. This presentation included the comprehensive water management strategy; water management strategies; potable water; potable water rates; parks non-potable water use; non-potable water rates; water budget – allocations; water budget – actual cost; irrigation water requirement; 2023 capital projects; 2024 capital projects; and finally, irrigation system replacement plans.

[Link to Agenda Packet Here](#)

### **New Staff Introductions/Staffing Update**

Kim King, Assistant Director, announced that two new positions have been filled in the Finance Division. First, Sandy Elliott has come from Pikes Peak – America’s Mountain to serve as the new Tourism and Finance Administrator. Second, Phillip Belmudez has been hired as an Analyst II for Finance.

Eric Becker, Park Maintenance and Operations Manager, informed the Board that the fourth and final Urban Trails Ranger Team Ranger I position had been accepted, and will be introduced next month.

### **Board Business**

Greg Thornton – Mr. Thornton reminded the Board that the Westside Community Center Working Committee is hosting a “saleabration” on June 15, 2024 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Julia Sands de Melendez – Ms. Sands de Melendez said that there is a LART Committee meeting later in the afternoon.

Sarah Bryarly – Ms. Bryarly said there is an Incline Friends meeting on Monday. Additionally, she said the Garden of the Gods Foundation is working on a few things as well.

Larry Bogue – Mr. Bogue stated that the first public meeting for Fishers Canyon Open Space will be on April 24<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m.

Amandla Atilano-Roque – Ms. Atilano-Roque asked for a Velodrome update in a coming meeting. Kim King, Assistant Director, said she would contact Velodrome staff for an update.

### **Adjournment**

**Motion: Move to adjourn the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Advisory Board meeting at 12:50 p.m.**

1<sup>st</sup> – Julia Sands de Melendez, 2<sup>nd</sup> – Andrea Perry, Approved, Unanimously.