



Minutes

City of Flagstaff

Open Spaces Commission

Thursday, September 12, 2013
4:00 – 6:00 pm

City Hall, Council Conference Room
211 West Aspen Avenue, Flagstaff, Arizona

A quorum of the Flagstaff City Council may be in attendance of the Open Spaces Commission meeting.



In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact 928-779-7660 (774-5281 TDD). Notification at least 48 hours in advance will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements.

CALL TO ORDER

COMMISSION MEMBERS:

Bruce Fox, Chair
Carrie Eberly
Paul Moore
John Fall
Jessica Gist
Rick Miller
Christopher Ives
Bryan Burton

CITY STAFF:

Nicole Woodman, Sustainability Manager
McKenzie Jones, Sustainability Specialist
Erik Olsen, Sustainability Aide

I. GENERAL BUSINESS

1. Call to Order

Chairman Fox called the meeting to order at 4:05 pm.

2. Public Participation

At this time, any member of the public may address the Commission on any subject that is not scheduled before the Commission on that day. The Arizona Open Meeting Law prohibits the Commission from discussing or taking action on an item which is not listed on the prepared agenda. Commission members may, however, respond to criticism made by those addressing the Commission, ask staff to review a matter, or ask that a matter be placed on a future agenda. To address the Commission on an item that is on the agenda, please wait for the Chair to call for Public Comment at the time the item is heard.

Please find general public comments below:

1. John Grahame spoke of his meeting with the designer of the Little America expansion. Mr. Grahame informed the Commission that the Little America designer is working with Natural Canyon Design to determine ways in which they can improve their section of the Rio de Flag to eradicate invasive species as well as restore the wetland and riparian ecosystem. Additionally, the possibility of a private developer designing a Rio greenway through the Little America property was also discussed.

Commissioner Miller inquired if a FUTS trail might go through the Little America site. Mr. Grahame informed the Commission that this was discussed with the designer and plans for a FUTS trail are being re-designed.

2. Nat White provided the Commission with a definition of Open Space referred to as Heritage Land. Mr. White requested that the Commission consider adding Heritage Land to the criteria in the open space discussion.
3. **Approval of Minutes**
Commissioner Burton moved to approve the August 22nd meeting minutes. Commissioner Miller seconded the motion.

4. **Discussion Items**

- A. Review of City-owned Parcels for Open Space Prioritization**

- Parcels #2 & #3: Koch Field

Ms. Jones informed the Commission that the Koch Field parcel #2 is not mentioned in the Doney Park area plan, but potential trails are mentioned in the Doney Park multi-modal plan. According to Ms. Jones, the County may want to build a trail along Silver Saddle. Parcel #3 does not have any conflict with trails or open space.

Commissioner Miller brought it to the attention of the Commission that Coconino County might be interested in trading the Koch Field parcels due to their location adjacent to a school and a park, for a County owned parcel that is more valuable to the City.

Commissioner Burton stated that parcels #2 and #3 do not meet the Commission's criteria for open space.

Commissioner Burton made a motion that the Commission recommend the Koch Field parcels not be retained for open space. Commissioner Eberly seconded the motion.

- Parcel #5: O'Leary and Lonetree

Commissioner Miller stated that a community garden, FUTS trail, and riparian area are all present in this parcel and he would be interested in recommending that it be designated as open space. Commissioner Gist agreed.

Commissioner Burton inquired about the cultural resources present within this parcel. Nat White informed the Commission that an old railroad grade is present in the area under discussion as well as an open space monument that he believes is the result of the Open Space and Greenway Plan. Mr. White also expressed his belief that this parcel is not suitable for development.

Commissioner Moore inquired at what point does the Commission discuss the possibility of other uses for the 17 City owned parcels under review. Ms. Jones explained that the Commission is solely tasked with discussing open space values. Other Commissions will make recommendations specific to their focus area. Ms. Jones informed the Commission that a lot of effort has been made to ensure that if affordable housing is built in the northwest portion of the parcel, it will not impact the already existing community garden.

Commissioner Miller stated that he would be agreeable to allowing affordable housing to be developed on the northwest portion of this parcel if the Housing agrees to protect the values identified by the Commission.

Commissioner Eberly made a motion to recommend that this group of parcels be designated as open space with the understanding that the northwest corner may be developed as affordable housing. The motion passed unanimously.

Parcel #10: Rio Behind Sawmill

Commissioner Ives voiced his concern that by recommending the majority of the 17 City owned parcels for designation as open space, the Commission might be unintentionally de-valuing their recommendations. Commissioner Burton stated that each parcel is being individually considered for its individual value. Therefore, the Commission reserves the right to recommend as many parcels for open space designation as they see fit.

Commissioner Miller stated that the majority of this parcel's open space value lies in the canyon along the Rio de Flag and that the small portion above the canyon's rim in the northwest corner could be developed without impacting the Rio de Flag. Commissioner Eberly inquired about why the Commission is dividing the parcel into sections they value when the purpose of the parcel review is to assess the parcel's value as a whole. Ms. Jones informed the Commission that it is acceptable to detail which part of the parcel has open space values.

Commissioner Eberly made a motion to recommend that this parcel be designated as open space and that if any portion is considered for another use the Commission would like to be consulted. Commissioner Burton seconded the motion.

Commissioner Miller stated that he would like the Commission to indicate their interest in the land adjacent to this parcel and review the land at a later time to determine its value as open space. Chairman Fox recommended that the Commission ask City staff to provide information regarding the adjacent parcels to the next Open Spaces Commission meeting.

John Grahame stated that it would be a beneficial process for the Commission to look at the parcels along the Rio de Flag especially if the Commission is interested in developing a Greenway in that area in the future. The Commission requested that the Friends of the Rio provide a presentation at a future Open Spaces Commission meeting.

Parcels #6: Phoenix Building

Commissioner Burton informed the Commission that the Phoenix building is currently being used for storage.

The Commission determined that this does not meet any of the criteria needed to recommend a parcel be designated as open space.

Commissioner Miller made a motion that the Open Spaces Commission does not want to recommend that this parcel be designated as open space. Commissioner Eberly seconded the motion.

Parcels #12: By Foxglenn Park

Commissioner Eberly inquired about whether the land to the east of this parcel contains roads, any additional parcels, or any developed land. Commissioner Burton informed the Commission that the land to the east is developed.

Commissioner Burton inquired if Foxglenn Trail travels through this parcel. Ms. Jones informed the Commission that it does.

Commissioner Gist informed the Commission that prairie dog towns exist throughout this parcel.

Nat White informed the Commission that this parcel provides a great view of Mt. Elden.

Commissioner Miller made a motion that the Open Spaces Commission recommend this parcel be designated for open space. Commissioner Moore seconded the motion.

Parcel #7: Multi-Use Field

Commissioner Miller inquired if Parks and Recreation is involved in the City parcel prioritization process. Ms. Jones informed the Commission that Parks and Recreation is involved.

Commissioner Gist made a motion that the Commission not recommend this parcel be designated as open space. Commissioner Miller seconded the motion.

B. Election of Officers

Chairman Fox nominated Commissioner Miller for the position of Open Spaces Commission Chair. Commissioner Eberly seconded the motion.

Commissioner Moore made a motion to nominate Commissioner Eberly and Commissioner Gist to serve as Vice Chairs of the Open Spaces Commission. Commissioner Miller seconded the motion.

- 5. Information Items To and From Commissioners and Staff**
- 6. Agenda Items for Next Meeting – September 26, 2013, 4 pm**
 - A. Review of City-owned Parcels for Open Space Prioritization**
- 7. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 pm.