



MINUTES

City of Flagstaff Open Spaces Commission

Thursday, November 13, 2014
4:00 pm – 6:00 pm

Staff Conference Room, City Hall
211 W Aspen Ave., Flagstaff, AZ 86001

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 928-213-2175 (774-5281 TDD). Notification at least 48 hours in advance will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements.

CALL TO ORDER

COMMISSION MEMBERS:

Rick Miller
Carrie Eberly
Jessica Gist
Stephen Hirst
Paul Moore
Bryan Burton
Christopher Ives

CITY STAFF:

McKenzie Jones
Betsy Emery
Martin Ince
Mark Brehl
Jim Davis

COMMUNITY MEMBERS:

John Grahame
Marilyn Weissman
Joe Walka
Rose Houk
Charlie Silver
Duke MacArthur
Paul Turner

I. GENERAL BUSINESS

1. Call to Order

Chair Miller called the meeting to order at 4:07 pm.

2. Public Participation

Members of Townsite Neighborhood (Charlie Silver, Rose Houk, and Joe Walka) presented concerns about the sale of the current City Yard property. The Townsite Neighbor Association feels the parcel would be better suited as open space to maintain the integrity of the neighborhood. The neighbors believe it fits the Open Space Master Plan Criteria and Priority Areas because of its proximity to Thorpe Park and the Rio de Flag. They raised concerns about the fragile nature of the area, financial implications associated with the sale of the property, and the irretrievability of this decision.

3. Approval of Minutes

Commission member Moore moved to approve the September 25, 2014 minutes. Commission member Hirst seconded the motion.

4. Discussion Items

A. Observatory Mesa Forest Health Update

Mark Brehl, Flagstaff Fire Department Lead Worker, presented a brief update on Forest Health treatments on Observatory Mesa and the Flagstaff Watershed Protection Project. Currently, the Flagstaff Fire Department is collecting data on Observatory Mesa, including taking GPS points of roads, trails, fence lines, and unmarked tanks. The Fire Department is working with many partners to collect data that will guide the stewardship plan and prescription, which will hopefully be available for review this winter and submitted to the Commission for comment. Approximately 60 acres of Section 12 have been thinned to reduce encroachment in to the meadow.

B. Potential Water Line across North San Francisco Open Space

Jim Davis, City of Flagstaff Utilities Department plan reviewer, introduced the potential for a new water transmission main to be constructed through a portion of the North San Francisco open space parcel. Paul Turner and Duke MacArthur, project engineers, presented the need for the line to go through the parcel to avoid damage to other utility mains located in the roadway. It is significantly less costly to construct the water line through the parcel than in the roadway. Clearing limits would require approximately a 35 foot back-of-curb swath. Project construction and remediation will be completed by next winter. Commission members discussed the concern that the disturbed area be planted with native seeds similar to what currently exists in the immediate area. Commission member Hirst motioned for support of routing this project through the parcel provided that post-construction remediation is at the standard of Flagstaff Urban Trail System reseeding and is planted with native seeds similar to what currently exists in the immediate area. Chair Miller seconded the motion and moved for a vote. The vote passed, with Commission member Ives abstaining.

During discussion, community member Marilyn Weissman suggested engineers do a public meeting to notify adjacent landowners along Turquoise Drive that their Neighborwoods will be affected by this project. Project engineer, Paul Turner, agreed to notify landowners via email.

C. Adoption Process for the Open Space Master Plan

McKenzie Jones, Open Spaces Staff Liaison, updated the Commission about the adoption process for the Open Space Master Plan. Sara Dechter, Comprehensive Planning Manager, provided a memo to the Commission outlining the adoption process and review requirements for the Master Plan. Sara will be attending the January Commission meeting to discuss this process in detail.

D. Council Decision to Standardize Commission Sizes

McKenzie Jones updated the Commission about the Council decision to standardize Commission sizes. Through this standardization process, the Open Space Commission will lose 2 seats through attrition – the Natural/Cultural Resource and At-Large seats. The Commission discussed other seats and their importance, eventually deciding to move this agenda item to the December Commission meeting.

E. Open Space Symposium Next Steps – Review of Map and Master Plan Edits

McKenzie Jones summarized the recent Open Space Symposium. The main outcome of this event was the commitment of local organizations to convene a meeting to discuss

open space issues and funding. Organizations include Friends of Flagstaff's Future, The Audubon Society, Flagstaff Area Stream Team, Northern Arizona Trail Running Association, Flagstaff Biking Organization, and Friends of the Rio. The Commission discussed stakeholder feedback acquired at the Symposium, including potential open space priority areas and Master Plan edits. These items will be discussed further at the December Commission meeting.

5. Information Items To and From Commissioners and Staff

None

6. Agenda Items for Next Meeting – December 18, 2014

A. Flagstaff Area Stream Team Update

B. Council Decision to Standardize Commission Sizes

C. Open Space Master Plan Map

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:01pm.