



MINUTES

City of Flagstaff Open Spaces Commission

March 25th, 2019

4:00 pm – 6:00 pm

COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL

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 928-213-2154. Notification at least 48 hours in advance will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements.

CALL TO ORDER

COMMISSION MEMBERS:

Bryan Burton, Chair
Libby Kalinowski, Vice-Chair
Jackie Thomas
William Wilson

Stephen Hirst
Jim Burton
David Zimmerman

STAFF LIAISON:

Robert Wallace, Open Space Specialist

1. Call to Order

Chair Burton called the meeting to order at 4:03pm.

2. Roll Call

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chair Burton	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commissioner Hirst
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commissioner Wilson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commissioner Thomas
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commissioner Burton	<input type="checkbox"/> Commissioner Zimmerman

3. 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.

No public participation.

4. Approval of January 28th, 2019 Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Hirst motioned to approve the January 28th, 2019 minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wilson. All voted in favor.

5. Business

A. Open Spaces Commission Vice-Chair Election (2 Minutes) – Robert Wallace,
Requested Action: Elect Vice Chair and Vote

Libby Kalinowski recently stepped off the commission leaving a vacant seat and the need to fill the Vice Chair role. Commissioner Thomas offered to serve as Vice-Chair. All voted in favor.

B. Active Transportation and FUTS Master Plan (20 Minutes) – Martin Ince,
Requested Action: Informational

Martin Ince, Multimodal Transportation Planner, presented on both the Active Transportation and Flagstaff Urban Trail System (FUTS) Master Plans. He mentioned that the Transportation Commission and Planning and Zoning Commissions will make recommendations to City Council about these plans and that the Council will make the final decisions.

These plans are intended to serve as detailed guides to enhancing walking, biking, and trails in Flagstaff.

Seven goals are outlined in these plans. They include the following:

1. Complete transportation networks for walking and biking.
2. Take care of the existing network through maintenance, snow removal, obstructions, closures, and detours.
3. Build a supportive community through promoting walking and biking and building equity.
4. Improve safety via education, enforcement, and safety campaigns.
5. Promote supportive land use and complete streets.
6. Travel demand management (try to reduce single occupancy vehicles by encouraging other options).
7. Assess progress by setting benchmarks and targets.

Mr. Ince described the regional connectivity aspect of the FUTS Master Plan. Connectivity happens through forest access, the Arizona Trail/Flagstaff Loop Trail, extension of the FUTS to outlying communities, and the Flagstaff Trails Initiative.

Mr. Ince focused the rest of his presentation on the open space opportunities of the FUTS Master Plan. Staff are beginning to inventory natural areas and corridors along FUTS that are at least 40 feet in width that might be opportunities for open space. The inventory focuses on attributes including status, protection, management, and acquisition.

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committees have been key to moving the FUTS Master Plan forward. They are using 16 prioritization factors to think through new FUTS trails into the future with 20-year projections and cost estimates. Part of the commissions' role is to help identify evaluation criteria

including access/proximity, performance measures, user surveys, trail counts, and feedback.

Community engagement has been a big focus of both the master plans. Staff have done seven surveys with over 2,000 responses, hosted public meetings, and provided information and feedback opportunities at community events.

Mr. Ince closed by showing a plan schedule that includes additional stakeholder engagement, public review, detailed review, and final approval. He directed those interested in learning more to the following website: www.flagstaff.az.gov/atmp.

Commissioner Hirst expressed gratitude that the City uses native plants for landscaping projects.

Chair Burton suggested a community input opportunity using a QR code or paper survey at trailheads so people can provide input while they recreate.

Commissioner Thomas suggested working with bike shops to gather community input on site in order to capture ideas and thoughts of visitors.

C. Properties Labeled as Open Space (10 Minutes) – All, Requested Action: Informational

The Commission requested better understanding of land parcels throughout the City that are labeled open space but, in fact, are not designated open space.

Mr. Wallace walked the commission through parcels of concern. The first is a City of Flagstaff-owned parcel located south of Knoles Elementary School. The parcel is dedicated, but not designated, open space. Charity Lee, Real Estate Manager, added that the parcel has a deed restriction which restricts it as open space.

The commission reviewed three additional parcels. One is located near Buffalo Park and does not have any deed restrictions. Another is City-owned located near Ponderosa Trails. This parcel is in the floodplain and will not likely ever be considered for development. The last parcel discussed is City-owned and located off Lone Tree Road. Mrs. Lee mentioned that the Lone Tree parcel includes Brannen Homes and Arroyo Park, and that staff are currently reviewing this parcel to consider splitting it up.

Mr. Wallace suggested that the commission include a more detailed review of these and other parcels (and the signage at these parcels) as part of their strategic plan. Commissioner Thomas suggested thinking about how to streamline the Open Space name change with the removal or replacement of the signage.

D. Open Space Programmatic Name Change (2 Minutes) – All, Requested Action: Discussion

Staff put a survey out on their newsletter to get public input on potentially changing the Open Space programmatic name. The options included Natural Spaces, Natural Areas, Conservation Lands, and Conservation Areas. The survey results showed that the public was split on whether or not the name should be

changed, and to what. The commission decided to keep thinking about the potential name change.

E. Milton/180 Corridor Proposal and Impacts to Observatory Mesa Discussion
(15 Minutes) – All, Requested Action: Discussion

The Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) is working on plans to reduce traffic on US 180 through the US 180 and Milton Road Corridor Master Plans. Two of the proposals in these plans propose to place a road on Observatory Mesa that would cut through the legally designated open space parcels.

The Commission discussed the proposal and its impacts on Observatory Mesa. Mr. Wallace mentioned that ADOT's final report on the alternatives will be completed in winter 2019. Comments can be submitted online or in writing, and citizens can opt to receive updates via email.

Chair Burton suggested the Commission write a letter to ADOT.

Commissioner Wilson mentioned that he disapproved of all the options, but especially the two that propose roads across Observatory Mesa. Commissioner Thomas questioned whether or not ADOT was communicating with Snowbowl since much of the traffic is a result of Snowbowl's private business. Commissioner Burton noted that it could be a land swap opportunity to eliminate the checkerboard pattern of the Observatory Mesa open space parcel.

F. Open Spaces Commission Strategic Planning Session (45 Minutes) – All,
Requested Action: Discussion

The Commission walked through their draft strategic plan that Mr. Wallace had edited since the January commission meeting. The biggest change is that the performance measures were simplified so that they could be removed as a stand-alone chapter and imbedded into another chapter.

Mr. Wallace walked through the goals, strategies, and action items associated with the strategies. He reviewed the performance measures as well.

The five proposed goals for the plan are as follows:

1. Cultivate and support partnerships that result in new approaches and best practices for open space management.
2. Promote the protection, restoration, and maintenance of lands and the natural, cultural, and scenic resources within.
3. Promote equitable access to natural areas, parks, trails, greenways, and public lands.
4. Foster discovery, learning, and stewardship through educational opportunities.
5. Promote sustainable long-term financial security of the Open Space Program to meet operational needs, capital investment requirements, and desired programs and services.

The Commission provided specific edits on the strategic plan draft that were noted directly into Mr. Wallace's Word document.

6. Reports and Updates

A. Open Space Events and Outreach Report (5 Minutes) – Kaeli Wells

Ms. Kaeli Wells, Open Space AmeriCorps VISTA, provided an update on events and outreach. Open Space hosted two open houses for the Schultz Creek trailhead project. Staff participated in STEM Night at the Dome on March 11th. Staff worked with the Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals to teach a class for Tuba City students on resource development.

Regarding open space management, an Arizona Conservation Experience (ACE) crew was hired and is carrying out restoration work at Picture Canyon. Staff hope to bring on another ACE crew this summer to help remove social trails and trash in the preserve. The Open Space program was awarded a \$20,000 grant for invasive weed management at Picture Canyon.

Staff are launching the Open Space Stewardship program. The first training will be held on May 18th and after just two weeks of recruiting only six of twenty spots remain. Presenters at the training will discuss wildlife, historic preservation, archeology, and stewardship.

Earth Day will be held on Saturday, April 20th at Bushmaster Park.

Finally, Open Space staff are in the process of hiring an AmeriCorps VISTA to replace Ms. Wells in August.

7. Information Items To and From (5 Minutes) – All

Staff received three applications for the open seat on the commission. These applications will go to City Council for vote in the near future.

8. Future Agenda Items (5 Minutes) - All

- None

9. Adjournment

Chair Burton adjourned the meeting at 5:56pm.

CERTIFICATION OF POSTING OF NOTICE

The undersigned hereby certifies that a copy of the foregoing notice was duly posted at Flagstaff City Hall on _____, at ____ a.m./p.m. in accordance with the statement filed by the Disability Awareness Commission with the City Clerk.

Dated this ____ day of _____, 2019.



Robert Wallace, Staff Liaison