



OPEN SPACE COMMISSION
Virtual Meeting
7/26/2021 4:00 p.m.



Minutes

Members Present

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commissioner William Wilson (Chair) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commissioner Eric Nolan |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commissioner Andy Bessler (Vice-chair) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commissioner Joseph Thomas |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commissioner Jim Burton | <input type="checkbox"/> Commissioner Jack Welch |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commissioner Mark Loseth | |

Councilmember / Liaison to the City Council

- Vice Mayor Becky Daggett

Staff and Others Present

- Cathy Guetschow – Administrative Specialist
- Martin Ince – Engineering and Capital Improvements Project Manager
- Michelle James - Guest
- Rebecca Sayers – Parks, Recreation, and Open Spaces Director
- Sylvia Struss – Open Space VISTA
- Daniel Symer – Zoning Code Manager
- Robert Wallace – Open Space Specialist

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m.

2. **ROLL CALL**

Commissioners Bessler, Loseth, Nolan, and Wilson were present for roll call. Commissioner Thomas joined at 4:23 p.m. Commissioners Burton and Welch were absent.

3. **APPROVAL OF THE JUNE 22, 2021 MEETING MINUTES**

A motion was made by Commissioner Bessler to approve the June 22, 2021 minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wilson. Motion passed unanimously with four (4) yea votes.

4. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

No public comments.

5. **BUSINESS ITEMS**

A. **City Code and Open Space**

Mr. Daniel Symer, Zoning Code Manager for the City of Flagstaff gave a presentation on zoning code regulations that also included the different types of open space within the code such as:

- Open Space - which includes any undeveloped space or area characterized by natural scenic beauty, if retained would maintain or enhance the conservation of natural or scenic resources.
- Open Space, Common - that includes the minimum amount of open space area within a development intended for the use and enjoyment of owners and occupants that is private to the development itself.

- Open Space, Private - that is the minimum amount of private open area required with each unit provided as outdoor yard areas, patios, decks, and balconies.

There are also three types of zones within open space and these include:

- Non-Transect Zones – has common open space and includes landscape buffers.
- Transect Zones – required by building type and includes landscape buffers.
- Resource Protection Overlay Zone -it includes floodplains, steep slopes, and forest. This has a limited use of land but doesn't prohibit the use of land.

Other supporting code provisions include landscaping standards, invasive plants, and outdoor lighting. Mr. Symer reported that open space is preserved in the development process through zoning code property and development standards, rezoning conditions of approval, and development agreements. He also noted that accessory dwelling units are allowed on lots containing single family dwelling units.

To make a recommendation to revise the code would include contacting Dan Symer or Robert Wallace, attend a neighborhood meeting for development, attend a Planning and Zoning Commission or City Council meeting.

Commissioner Wilson asked what the Commission could focus on regarding open space. Mr. Symer suggested that the Commission continue working on the Open Space Master Plan and establish goals. Mr. Ince suggested to start identifying parcels and to understand the tools to preserving the areas, such as resource protection.

B. Commission Strategic Plan Adoption

Mr. Wallace reviewed the change that was made to the Strategic Plan with the Commissioners noting that the most current change was made to the "Open Space Conservation Criteria Consideration," by implementing a wider spread of numbers from 0 to 9.

A motion was made by Commissioner Nolan to approve the Strategic Plan as proposed. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bessler. Motion passed unanimously with five (5) yea votes.

C. Open Space Integrated System Planning

Mr. Wallace reported that he received feedback from most of the Commissioners regarding the rating of the properties and that Commissioner Wilson took time to conduct a field visit to support the Commission's conversation regarding said properties.

Commissioner Wilson shared with the Commissioners his photos of the different properties that they have been reviewing.

Mr. Wallace reported that the consensus from the Commissioners was that the property groupings do have open space value and are important to the completion of the open space system. Two different ranking reviews were presented to the Commissioners, one with a number ranking and the other a number ranking using comments.

- Continental Park 1 grouping was recognized as one of the best opportunities for providing additional recreational benefits to the community including connectivity. Ranked 5.33, comments 1
- The Townsend Winona grouping would provide connectivity to the county, but the property did not provide the same benefit as the other groupings do. Ranked 4.88, comments 4

- Continental Park 2 grouping would lend to a partnership opportunity with the Parks Department in the expansion of Continental. Ranked 4.86, comments 2
- Fort Tuthill 1 and 2 grouping would add value to the FUTS and would be a standalone corridor. Fort Tuthill 1 ranked 4.22, comments 3 and Fort Tuthill 2 ranked 4, comments 5

After much discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Bessler to approve the number ranking using comments. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Loseth. Motion passed unanimously with five (5) yea votes.

D. Observatory Mesa Trail Planning

Mr. Wallace reported that staff has been working with the American Conservation Experience to access Lowell Observatory property when it was indicated that they would like to create a partnership for the creation of a trail plan for the greater observatory mesa natural area which includes some Lowell, the City's and Forest property. Commissioners to review the plan and discuss at a future Commission meeting.

E. McMillan Mesa Community Celebration

There was no discussion or report given. The community celebration will be placed on the agenda as a future item.

6. REPORTS AND UPDATES

A. Council Representative Report, Vice Mayor Becky Daggett

No new information was reported.

B. Open Space Management Report

- FY20-FY21 had 24 Open Space Stewards that donated over 700 hours of their time to talk to visitors, pull weeds, clean up trash, refill map boxes and perform graffiti removal.
- Staff have held three guided hikes on the McMillan Mesa. An adult interpretive hike will be held on July 31 and a family hike is scheduled for August 7.
- Weed pulls continue to be held at Picture Canyon every other Wednesday.
- Two different youth volunteer groups removed old irrigation hose and other pieces of trash from the Rio de Flag and Picture Canyon.
- Staff will be working with Ed Shank in Stormwater to remove the last of the Siberian Elm trees on Izabel Street and start laying native seed.
- On August 20, staff will celebrate Arbor Day by planting native trees between the FUTS Trail on the McMillan Mesa and the Veterans Home to create a buffer.
- Staff will be participating in the Festival of Science on September 17-26.
- Two of the three curb cuts that provided illegal entry onto the McMillan Mesa have been replaced with curbs with the assistance of the Parks and Street Departments.

C. Open Space Program Budget Report

No new information was reported.

7. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS TO AND FROM THE COMMISSIONERS AND STAFF

No new information was reported.

8. AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETING

Next meeting: August 23, 2021, 4-6 PM

- McMillan Mesa Community Celebration

- Hospital Development Plan Update
- Open Space Integrated System and Community Development Considerations
- Open Space Easements – Bryce Doty
- John Wesley Powell Planning Update – Sara Dechter
- FY22 Commission Priorities
 - City Code Updates
 - Observatory Mesa Trail Plan

9. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Loseth moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wilson. All voted in favor. Meeting adjourned at 6:01 p.m.