



OPEN SPACE COMMISSION
Virtual Meeting – Join Teams Meeting

9/27/2021 4:00 p.m.



Draft 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 checked="" 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
- Chris Liniger – Director, Facility Program Development for Northern Arizona Health Care
- Martin Ince – Engineering and Capital Improvements Project Manager
- Michele James - Guest
- Rebecca Sayers – Parks, Recreation, and Open Spaces Director
- Sylvia Struss – Open Space VISTA
- 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, Burton, Loseth, Thomas, and Wilson were present for roll call. Commissioner Nolan joined at 4:05 p.m. Commissioner Welch was absent.

3. **APPROVAL OF THE AUGUST 23, 2021 MEETING MINUTES**

A motion was made by Commissioner Wilson to approve the August 23, 2021 minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Loseth. Motion passed unanimously with five (5) yeas votes.

4. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

No public comments.

5. **BUSINESS ITEMS**

A. **Hospital Development Plan Update**

Chris Liniger, Director, Facility Program Development for Northern Arizona Health Care (NAH) explained that NAH is the largest organization in the region that services more than 50,000 square miles and 700,000 people in communities across the region as well as visitors. He reported that Flagstaff Medical Center (FMC) is the only level one trauma center north of the Phoenix Metropolitan area. Over the last two years they have noticed the inadequacies of their current facilities and the inability to expand.

NAH has a health village vision that would include creating and developing a destination to promote healthy lifestyles besides the regular services they would offer when sick. The health village would be built on 180 acres west of Interstate 17 by Fort Tuthill and would comprise of a medical center, other medical buildings, and a hotel. There are 30 acres on the westside of the property that are being reviewed for a wellness retreat and are looking to preserve as much of the natural beauty that exists. The funding for the project will be approximately \$450 million in bonds and \$300 million in cash reserves with no cost to the taxpayer. NAH plans to develop their land in an environmentally respectful manner that will be more energy efficient than the current FMC.

Mr. Liniger reported that there are no current commitments for the FMC campus, but are committed to be in line with the needs of NAH and the Flagstaff community. He explained that they are currently in the design phase of the new hospital and are hoping to have it completed by 2026.

Commissioner Bessler questioned if the new building would meet LEED standards and have solar energy. Mr. Liniger reported that NAH has not identified a priority to meet a certain certification level of LEED but are working with engineers to explore it and if viable, solar energy. They are committed to making sure that the building is designed in a way to incorporate it if they are not able to at first.

Commissioner Nolan brought up concerns regarding waste and would like the developers to consider it, since it is in the design phase of how these buildings will address the issues of waste and recycling. Mr. Liniger stated that they will continue to work with their partners to make sure that they don't contribute more waste and are looking into ways that they can reduce it.

Commissioner Wilson questioned what other interest groups or stakeholders, besides the County, does NAH propose to partner with to accomplish their goals of developing the land in an environmentally respectful manner. Mr. Liniger reported that staff has investigated partnering with Rick Shusten and Ross Wilson who have 400 acres that are proposed to be zoned residential that would include single family neighborhoods to apartments with some affordable housing options. Mr. Liniger said that this would be beneficial to NAH staff that can't afford to live in Flagstaff. NAH staff has met with the City Parks and Recreation staff, the County Parks and Recreation Commissions, and the County Board in which they expressed concerns regarding the health village development getting too dense and that the roads do not get too close to the FUTS trail. Mr. Liniger reported that they will keep a 50-foot barrier between the road and FUTS trails.

Commissioner Thomas questioned how NAH anticipates the Wellness Center and the FUTS trail will work together. Mr. Liniger explained that they envision staff that live close by will use the FUTS trail to get back and forth to work but doesn't think that the trail would be used as much by the Wellness Center since a person would have to cross 30 acres to get to the trail.

B. Recommended Program of Acquisitions – 2004 Bond Fund Allocations

Martin Ince, Engineering and Capital Improvements Project Manager gave a presentation to the Commissioners updating them on staff's efforts to plan for open space and FUTS acquisitions with the remainder of the 2004 Open Space Bond. Mr. Ince reminded the Commissioners that the bond was a general obligation bond in the amount of \$7.6 million that was approved by voters in 2004 and had two general purposes. One was for neighborhood open space and the other was for acquisition of easements and corridors to support the FUTS system. He explained that there are three categories of acquisitions for the remainder of the bond:

- FUTS corridors and easements.
- Small parcels, typically larger than corridors and easements.

- Larger tracts per integrated open space planning

Mr. Ince reported that staff is in the process of collecting information to bring back to the Commission to present and have further discussions.

C. McMillan Mesa Community Celebration Update

Commission Bessler and the Friends of Flagstaff Future held their first meeting in September to discuss the planning of the celebration of prop 413. They were able to form workgroups that will work on different aspects of the event. The next meeting will be held October 21 at 4:00 p.m. The event will be held at Buffalo Park with hopes of having the celebration in spring.

D. McMillan Mesa Rezone Application Update

Mr. Wallace reported that the rezone application was resubmitted for City review. If there are no further comments or suggestions given from staff, the next step will be to schedule a Planning and Zoning hearing date. When directed, staff will work on obtaining a new title report to accompany the rezone. Once all the steps have been completed it will be scheduled for the City Council Ordinance.

E. Greater Observatory Mesa Trail Planning

Mr. Wallace reported that staff is working on the final draft of the plan and hope to have it completed by the end of the year. The next step would include working to inform stake holders and partners, and to solicit feedback on the plan. It would also include giving presentations to partners, the community, and to the City's various Commissions and Committees. He mentioned if any of the Commissioners were interested in volunteering their time to help that it would be appreciated.

F. Commission November/December Planning

Mr. Wallace asked if the Commissioners would like to reschedule or combine the November and December Commission meetings to accommodate the holidays and vacations. Commissioners agreed to combine the November and December Commission meeting for Monday, December 6.

6. REPORTS AND UPDATES

A. Council Representative Report, Vice Mayor Becky Daggett

No new information was reported.

B. Open Space Management Report

- The last weed pull will be held on September 29 at Picture Canyon.
- Cub Scouts volunteered to plant native grass and flower seed on the east side of McMillan Mesa along N. Izabel St.
- Staff hosted a Mushroom Walk that was led by Mike and Sara Dechter.
- Staff has partnered with Killip Elementary to offer the afterschool Evergreens Club and is held at Flagstaff Middle School.
- Staff conducted a full moon hike at Buffalo Park on September 20.
- Staff hosted Plein Air in Open Spaces during the week of Festival of Science. Participant's will have their artwork displayed at the First Friday Art Walk on October 1.
- Staff announced that Monday, October 11 is Indigenous People's Day and will hold an opening prayer at the McMillan Mesa Natural Area. There will also be a guided hike at Picture Canyon.

C. Open Space Program Budget Report

No new information was reported.

7. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS TO AND FROM THE COMMISSIONERS AND STAFF

Mr. Wallace reported that the City Clerk's office has asked for suggestions for the upcoming Commission newsletter. Commissioners can email recommendations or suggestions for content to Mr. Wallace before the end of the month.

Rebecca Sayers, Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Director reported that City Council held a second reading on September 7 regarding the ordinance to establish Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Events as a standalone division and voted in favor of it. The ordinance will go into effect on October 7.

8. AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETING

Next meeting: October 25, 2021, 4-6 PM

- Regional Plan Updates
- Open Space Integrated System and Community Development Considerations
- Open Space Easements – Bryce Doty
- FY22 Commission Priorities
 - McMillan Mesa Rezone Application Update
 - City Code Update Planning
 - Greater Observatory Mesa Trail Planning
- Open Spaces Commission Term of Office and Position Review

9. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Nolan moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Burton. All voted in favor. Meeting adjourned at 5:24 p.m.