

**MINUTES OF THE
SANTA FÉ COUNTY
COUNTY OPEN LAND TRAILS AND PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
(COLTPAC)**

Thursday, January 19, 2012

1. CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Santa Fé County Open Land, Trails and Parks Advisory Committee (COLTPAC) was called to order on the above date at approximately 6:00 p.m. by Chair Sam Pallin at the Santa Fé County Community Projects Conference Room, 901 West Alameda, Santa Fé, New Mexico.

2. ROLL CALL

Roll Call indicated the presence of a quorum as follows:

Members Present

Sam Pallin, Chair
William Hutchinson
Sandra Massengill [arriving later]
Matthew Montoya
Michael Patrick
Jerry Rogers

Members Absent

Eliza Kretzmann [resigning]
Judy Kowalski, Vice Chair [excused]
Scott Stovall [excused]

Staff Members Present

Beth Mills
Colleen Baker
Megan Bayer

Others Present

Bill Baxter
Tim Rogers
Keith Wilson
Bill Johnson

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mr. Jerry Rogers wanted to talk about the development at Santuario de Chimayó (under Matters from the Committee)

By consensus, the agenda was approved as presented.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 17, 2011

Dr. Mills said Ms. Kowalski asked for a correction on page 7 to a comment credited to her on that page. She was asking what the consequences would be if the land were appraised at less than the asking price.

Mr. Hutchinson moved to approve the November 17, 2011 minutes as corrected. Mr. Jerry

Rogers seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous voice vote.

5. MATTERS FROM THE PUBLIC

Dr. Mills introduced Ms. Megan Bayer as the new staff person. She worked with the State prior to becoming the Santa Fé River Project Manager. She has already done a tremendous amount.

Ms. Bayer said she was pleased to be here and getting acquainted.

Ms. Massengill arrived at this time.

The committee members introduced themselves to Ms. Bayer.

Dr. Mills announced that Eliza Kretzmann will be resigning. She was moving to Albuquerque so she couldn't participate any longer. She also had conflicts this month and next. So they would have an at-large vacancy open to a resident in any part of the county. She asked members to find out who might be interested. They would be taking resumes and letters of interest and would advertise in the papers as well.

A. Santa Fé Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Bicycle Master Plan - Tim Rogers

Mr. Wilson briefly explained the MPO to Megan. He said Mr. Tim Rogers was the consultant for the Bicycle Master Plan and they were in the process of formalizing the draft by month end and then get approvals from city and county after TPB approval.

Mr. Tim Rogers said this was part two of his presentation. He did parts 1 and 3 in November. This part was on recommendations and describing county projects and abandoned rail lines.

Using a power point presentation, he went through the objectives for each goal. Goal 1 was to have more and better facilities within an integrated and effective bicycle system. Goal 2 was for Santa Fé and their guests to be able to confidently, safely and effectively ride bikes within a shared transportation network. Part VI was the implementation plan and it had four sections. They were working on mapping to improve the system. The priority was on connectivity. In the system, phase A was for projects up to five years out; phase B was for 5-10 years and phase C was beyond ten years.

He described the two abandoned railways: the New Mexico Central and the Chili Line. He summarized their history and explained how they would be used for trails.

Chair Pallin said he is not as familiar with the Santa Fé environs as he is with the southern part of the county and that he promoted equestrian use. Recently Edgewood completed a trail for multi-use but put big bark chips on the trails. That kept horses out of there. Paving also discouraged horses. He hated to see everything go to hard surface trails.

Mr. Tim Rogers clarified that paving was only proposed for densely developed areas.

Ms. Massengill asked if there was a federal funding source.

Mr. Wilson said FHWA provided some and they competed with other projects.

Mr. Johnson said as a person who rode 365 days each year, this was awesome - especially trying to coordinate all of these things.

Mr. Montoya asked if the County had set aside any of the budget for developing projects like these.

Chair Pallin said some of their work overlapped.

Dr. Mills said they did have some funding for trail connections like the Arroyo Hondo Trail.

Ms. Baker said this would help us set priorities for seeking other funds.

Mr. Montoya asked if it was a large amount.

Ms. Baker agreed - primarily for hard surfaces. With the Rail Trail only the first 1.7 miles was funded. It was \$900,000 so it was expensive. They had to look at various sources. Staff emphasized the funding for maintenance when they acquired property for which they were obligated.

Mr. Baxter agreed that one trail didn't fit all as was pointed out. Equestrian trails were different than commuting trails. Most county trails were for fat tire vehicles like mountain bikes. There could be a component for seniors who might ride a three wheeler with special needs and desires.

Ms. Baker said multi-purpose trails were difficult. They were scoping the Arroyo Hondo Trail now along with some arterials. On the River Trail, most horses would travel in the river bed.

Dr. Mills said they discussed a hard surface on NM Central with a soft surface along the side. So they were trying to keep those uses in mind.

Ms. Baker agreed they tried to plan for all uses.

Chair Pallin said urban trails were not attractive for horses.

Ms. Baker said with a long distance trail they had to think about who was going to use it - probably very few would use a long distance hard surface.

Mr. Tim Rogers said that was why NM Central was planned in sections. They were showing bicycle and pedestrians only.

Mr. Patrick asked if they were easy to bike.

Mr. Hutchinson said they were not.

Mr. Tim Rogers said Estancia and Moriarty have made application on some of the parts of NM Central.

Mr. Wilson said the MPO would keep County staff informed as they moved forward.

6. ACTION ITEMS

There were no action items.

7. MATTERS FROM THE COMMITTEE

Mr. Jerry Rogers - the Archdiocese was planning a very substantial development project at Santuario de Chimayó. They had a vested interest there because the County purchased land behind the santuario to help protect the santuario from adverse development and now the church itself was planning a substantial development. He just wanted to make sure COLTPAC kept its eyes on it. Open Space staff will attend County Technical Review Team meetings when a formal application comes forward from the consultant for the Archdiocese.

The diocese has a paid staff person to look at cultural issues. Monsignor Jerome Martínez was actually a member of the Board of Trustees of the National Trust for a short while.

Dr. Mills said a technical review team from Land Use had worked on reviewing it. She thought it would be good for them to present to COLTPAC.

Mr. Jerry Rogers agreed. You could see where they were making the plans and it was immediately adjacent to county property.

Dr. Mills said one aspect that was positive was to restore the Abeyta House. She asked if it was already on the state register of historic places and apparently it was not. That listing could be a positive outcome.

Mr. Jerry Rogers agreed it would be good.

Dr. Mills asked if they should try for the February meeting. The Committee agreed.

A. Opportunities for Protection of Agricultural Land (Michael Patrick)

Mr. Patrick said he had been working with the Trust for Public Land in Utah to protect agricultural land. He didn't think a lot had been done in Santa Fé County by the County so he thought it would be good to discuss how an Agricultural Protection Plan could help us with open space goals.

He explained why and how to do it. Federal funds were available. They had many small farms and large ranches that were historically important. There were common challenges economically to farmers and ranchers. It tied in with the county's sustainable growth management plan.

The Locavore movement included the farmers market and the County's historic and cultural roots. As we try to sustain food sources it was important to figure out how we could protect what was important.

They should leverage the County's limited open space funds and staff by purchasing development rights and not land. County funds could be a match. A million dollar property could be protected with \$150,000 of county funds. The majority of the work could be done by land trust staff instead of county staff. Mr. Patrick showed pictures of an example in Corrales.

He pointed out that conservation easements had advantages in protecting the conservation values of the property. It protected the land in perpetuity. Owners could pass the land on to their kids. It retained good land stewards as property owners and managers.

The Federal Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program provided \$150 million to purchase conservation easements in 2012 through USDA and NRCS. It provided up to 50% and required at least a 25% cash match. The New Mexico allocation was \$950,000 and was being underutilized. Santa Fé County match could attract significant federal funds.

The Committee discussed who might be interested and who the owners could trust to handle it.

Chair Pallin asked if he would envision hiring staff to work on this.

Mr. Patrick said the New Mexico Land Conservancy had a project in Santa Fé County that used federal money and matched it.

He asked if the COLTPAC would support this means of agricultural protection and offered to discuss it with County Commissioners. He would encourage applications to COLTPAC for matching funds to purchase conservation easements.

Ms. Baker thought they couldn't do it right now.

Chair Pallin suggested putting in the bond proposal.

Mr. Jerry Rogers thought if there was some money right now COLTPAC wouldn't have to justify participation.

Ms. Massengill said that was one of their goals.

Ms. Baker said they would have to clarify their role in it.

Mr. Patrick thought it could include the County in cost sharing.

Ms. Baker said that how to avoid the anti-donation clause was worked out in Colorado but had not been done here. They would have to figure that structure out.

Dr. Mills said it was clear in the open space plan that protecting traditional agricultural land was a priority for the program. But as Commissioners changed the new ones were not familiar with the plan and would have to be educated. There was some opposition to expanding open space acquisitions on the current commission.

Mr. Patrick said he could imagine building a coalition.

Dr. Mills said the Food Policy Board would be interested.

Mr. Montoya asked if the owner would still pay property tax.

Mr. Patrick agreed.

Ms. Baker said it could be less tax. They get an exemption for putting an easement on their property. The exemption had use restrictions written into the agriculture easement. She said there was a particular need in the northern part of the county..

Chair Pallin thought that in this economic climate you might find people changing their minds. Ms. Baker agreed but many were conflicted on it.

8. MATTERS FROM OPEN SPACE AND TRAIL STAFF

A. Discussion of Alternatives for Rail Trail Trailhead at U.S. 285

Chair Pallin noted that Mr. Stovall wasn't here and was most interested in it.

Dr. Mills showed the alternatives for a trailhead for the Borque property. She briefly reviewed it on the map. They had some problems with the application - half would be unusable and steep and on the other side of the tracks. There was also the obligation to accommodate the rail platform and what it would look like and how many users it would have.

She had gone to the State Land office to find out if they would grant an easement for putting the trailhead on their land. There was an agriculture lease on it and also a ROW easement for development to the northwest. It didn't conflict with Land Office policy to have more than one easement.

So the Land Office would grant the ROW easement for the trail and she asked if the parking area could be added and they agreed.

She then went back to Commonweal about where they might locate the trailhead and parking lot on state land. She showed where their parking lot was now on Commonweal property. They came to an agreement that it would be best to expand the developer's parking lot and drop the Borque application. The terrain here was perfect and was the entrance to the Galisteo Basin Preserve. If they did that, it would not be an equestrian trail there. The equestrian trail would be further south. It didn't seem reasonable that equestrians would use the rail trail here.

Chair Pallin agreed that only locals would use it there.

Mr. Baxter asked how this would relate to the rail platform.

Dr. Mills said it wouldn't. She was suggesting 125x50 feet for the first phase of parking and then an additional 125 feet if needed in phase two.

Chair Pallin asked how the cost would change.

Dr. Mills said they would have to have an easement but didn't talk about compensation.

Ms. Baker agreed they needed to do a thorough assessment on it.

Dr. Mills pointed out that all other areas were constrained by the features.

Mr. Johnson asked if tourists stopping there was still a possibility.

Dr. Mills said it would depend on signage.

Ms. Baker asked if it would be beneficial to have it on one side only.

Dr. Mills said the west side was the best spot.

Ms. Massengill asked if the County would have to lease from the State Land Office on the east and if she was talking about asphalt there.

Dr. Mills said it would be a compacted natural surface.

Chair Pallin asked what they would lose.

Dr. Mills said they had lost access to the NM Central alignment in the western section of the Galisteo Basin Preserve due to residential lot sales.

Chair Pallin thought they should finish negotiations with him.

The committee liked this alternative.

B. Consideration of a request to donate ~5 acres to the County by Elizabeth Davis in order to facilitate the connection of the Madrid Greenbelt to the Madrid "Wilderness"/Open Space.

Dr. Mills said this was a potential application and not going through the formal process because it was a donation.

She showed the open space the County had and the greenbelt and outlined a possible donation area on the west. The landowners have experienced a lot of trespassing from Madrid residents. It was not a developable area and had lots of coal waste. It was about five acres they would donate to the County.. It would be a tax write-off for them and allow the County better connectivity to and from the greenbelt to the open space.

She asked if the Committee wished to take action on it in February.

Mr. Baxter said for the record that was the Morgan-Jones mine and was a significant area.

Mr. Hutchinson asked about any environment issues.

Dr. Mills said it was no different than on their current property.

Ms. Baker said it was not a contamination issue - just possible dust.

The Committee gave consensus to go ahead.

Ms. Massengill asked if there weren't certain programs for recreational trails.

Ms. Baker said she could contact Moses about it.

Ms. Massengill explained she was just thinking it might be possible to use for match.

Ms. Baker said the Rail Trail was under construction and El Camino River Trail by 599 was almost completed. The bridges were in. At South Meadows they just finished negotiations for a design contract. The design for Edgewood was almost complete. Arroyo Hondo had wetlands restoration was underway.

Mr. Hutchinson asked if next time they could follow up on Tim Roger's presentation on supporting Complete Streets.

Chair Pallin and Ms. Baker agreed.

Mr. Patrick asked if staff could schedule a tour of the River Trail.

Chair Pallin asked how many miles it was.

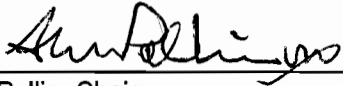
Ms. Baker said it was 8 miles from Frenchy's Field to the wastewater treatment plant.

Mr. Johnson said that to 599 was six miles.

9. ADJOURN

Ms. Massengill moved to adjourn the meeting and it passed by unanimous voice vote.
The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Approved by:



Sam Pallin, Chair

Submitted by:

Carl Boaz
Carl Boaz, Stenographer

SFC CLERK RECORDED 04/23/2012

COUNTY OF SANTA FE) OPEN LANDS & TRAILS MI
STATE OF NEW MEXICO) ss PAGES: 9

I Hereby Certify That This Instrument Was Filed for
Record On The 23RD Day Of April, 2012 at 08:46:40 AM
And Was Duly Recorded as Instrument # **1666943**
Of The Records Of Santa Fe County

Witness My Hand And Seal Of Office
Valerie Espinoza
Deputy _____ County Clerk, Santa Fe, NM

