

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

Thursday, July 21, 2011

1. CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Santa Fé County Open Land and Trails Planning and Advisory Committee (COLTPAC) was called to order on the above date at approximately 6:00 p.m. by Vice Chair Judy Kowalski 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

Judy Kowalski, Vice Chair
William Hutchinson
Matthew Montoya
Michael Patrick
Jerry Rogers
Scott Stovall

Members Absent

Sam Pallin, Chair
Eliza Kretzmann
Sandra Massengill

Staff Members Present

Beth Mills
Colleen Baker

Others Present

Bill Baxter
Bill Johnson

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Dr. Mills said under updates from staff the update on San Pedro and also the Piedras acquisition were additions to that.

Mr. Hutchinson moved to approve the agenda as amended. Mr. Patrick seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous voice vote.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM JUNE 28, 2011

Mr. Patrick moved to approve the minutes from June 28, 2011 as presented. Mr. Hutchinson seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous voice vote.

5. MATTERS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no matters from the public.

6. MATTERS FROM THE COMMITTEE

A. Follow-up on Surveys for Trail Users

Vice Chair Kowalski recalled the Committee at the last meeting agreed they would come with ideas on what to include in the trail users' survey. She suggested they didn't have to discuss it now if people wanted more time.

Dr. Mills said she met with some people out on the Arroyo Hondo Open space and thought they should use that as the trial spot for the survey. It would make a good pilot. Vice Chair Kowalski agreed.

Vice Chair Kowalski asked if she inquired of them whether they would be inclined to go on-line to answer a survey.

Dr. Mills said she hadn't but Ms. Bemis who was with the association there said she would be willing to go to folks living near there.

Vice Chair Kowalski thought it would be good to be there to see who used the trail. She felt that having a real presence there would be helpful. She wouldn't favor a lengthy questionnaire but one that asked basic questions.

Dr. Mills said they had an information box where people could leave a survey.

Mr. Johnson agreed that the Arroyo Hondo Open Space would be a good place to start. Often, he was the only person there. It would be easier to fill it out while there rather than looking it up on line.

Vice Chair Kowalski said she would be willing to be out there on a weekend.

Mr. Baxter felt that would provide a better sampling.

Dr. Mills was interested in knowing how much use it was getting and whether it was mostly mountain bikes or equestrians.

Mr. Johnson asked if there was a way to put a counter at the gate. Dr. Mills didn't know.

Vice Chair Kowalski thought it would be most helpful to get feedback from users and use volunteers to do the surveys. She offered to put together some questions to ask. The Committee nodded assent.

Vice Chair Kowalski asked for the survey to be on the next agenda.

Mr. Patrick was curious about Dee Frankfourth's efforts and the County Commission's response.

Dr. Mills said she met with Commissioner Vigil today to find out where they were on action for going out for a bond. She was anxious to have staff explain their strategy and wanted to know if COLTPAC was supportive and in what way. So there was support from Commissioner Vigil and Commissioner Holian and she thought from Commissioner Stefanics too. She needed to follow up on the legal issue and if the bonding capacity needed to be updated.

The other thing Commissioner Vigil asked which encouraged her was - "just call the attorney and ask him if there was enabling legislation or not." so having her say that was encouraging. She needed to call Ms. Frankfourth to see where she was on the task.

Mr. Patrick thought she was waiting for the County Manager to say something. Some action step was needed. Dr. Mills understood.

7. MATTERS FROM OPEN SPACE AND TRAILS STAFF

B. Update on Edgewood Open Space Feasibility Study

Because Ms. Baker had not yet arrived, the Committee considered item B first.

Dr. Mills said the feedback she took away was very helpful - to really begin a feasibility study on operational costs. She didn't have a report to share this evening but was working on it. It would include operating costs and staffing and what made sense from what the public was saying. They had more ideas on use to get a better sense of what was happening. She started working with the consultant on it. So they were working on a document with the helpful direction they received. By next month she should have some numbers to share and she and Ms. Baker could sit down with people from the Town of Edgewood to get a clear understanding about budgeting.

Ms. Baker arrived.

Vice Chair Kowalski related that she went to Santa Rosa State Park and saw exactly what the Committee was looking at for Edgewood with equestrian facilities including a big turnaround, a small corral and bathrooms. She offered to put staff in touch with them.

Ms. Baker thought that would be good.

Mr. Baxter was at the Edgewood meeting and contributed a little. There were a lot of open spaces and he saw the General Plan and direction. It seemed to be their wish that the little open space be developed as trailer space for out-of-town visitors - one that would augment the horse related events in that community. They seemed to want it as a convenience for out of area users. That was quite different than what COLTPAC had done in open space elsewhere in the county.

Dr. Mills agreed. They put a lot of stock in what the immediate neighbors wanted. For example, they

were continuing the dialogue with La Cienega community members in managing those resources at Los Carrizales. So she really relied on the voices of that community for developing the open space.

Mr. Patrick thought the proposed use at Edgewood was appropriate.

Ms. Baker agreed that a lot of the county property did encourage tourism and bringing in visitors. That was why their design needed to change a little. A small arena was part of local use.

Vice Chair Kowalski said there was nothing that prohibited the Committee from developing for outside users. Ms. Baker agreed.

A. Background and Discussion of Marquez Property / Potential Application

Ms. Baker addressed this property. She pointed out where the property was located. It was on the Arroyo Hondo near the rail trail and people were using it as a trail now. It was directly south of St. Francis Drive.

Vice Chair Kowalski asked if there was a connection with the SFCC trail.

Ms. Baker said there was a connection to the south. She explained some background on the property. Mr. Marquez had the three little lots to the west side and had no access to them. It was an interesting piece of property with active farming in the arroyo. It had potential but she didn't know if they could work that out with the family. The north portion had junk on it. There was a road that came close near the rail line. Access was a real issue.

Mr. Baxter asked if there was any indication on what the State had in mind for south of St. Francis.

Mr. Stovall asked if they were talking about 3 parcels.

Ms. Baker said no - it was the big area but he wanted to keep certain parcels.

Mr. Johnson said the arroyo was a steep area.

Ms. Baker said it was very wide up the way.

Mr. Stovall thought it would tie in well with the Rail Trail. There was a trestle that went around that curve. He didn't know if that was private land.

Ms. Baker said the other Marquez property was large - close to 30 acres - but after he kept what he wanted the County would get 10. The Terrell property was 40 acres.

Mr. Johnson said Mark Schwartz gave a lecture on the Arroyo Hondo Pueblo which was located in that area.

Mr. Stovall asked if there was any easement through there. Ms. Baker said no.

Mr. Stovall asked if that was a possibility for the existing trail.

Ms. Baker said there was a little trail that runs off the Rail Trail. The Rail Trail was in the ROW. It was a social trail through the meadow. It was heavily used and was beautiful.

Vice Chair Kowalski wondered if it might be an entree to this larger property.

Ms. Baker thought it might be possible. It was his aunt who owned that parcel. She was unsure what to tell him right now. He was concerned about access.

Mr. Rogers was interested for reasons Mr. Johnson gave. It was a large tract and he wished they could acquire more larger tracts. It was more interesting visually with escarpment on both sides and alluvial land below. He would bet there were pueblo remnants there. It was a very attractive piece.

Mr. Patrick said he had hiked in there and loved the views. He wanted to know how much it would cost.

Ms. Baker thought they should find out what interest the State had.

Mr. Baxter also felt this was the type of property the Committee should focus on - a large parcel. There would be some connections from Rancho Viejo to 599 and down to Lamy. With that kind of open space 30 years from now, the city planner would say it was a lot easier to punch a six lane road through there than where the houses were. It needed to be high on the list of protected open space.

Mr. Hutchinson offered to find out if DOT had any interest there. It was worth pursuing.

Vice Chair Kowalski agreed. Further discussions were warranted.

Mr. Stovall favored tying up those three parcels since they couldn't do anything on the big one until after the bond sale.

Ms. Baker thought the owner seemed to be more interested in access for it than money for the bottom part.

Mr. Stovall pointed out that it would square up the bike path and around the trestle. You could go under the trestle to hit the neighborhood west of there.

Dr. Mills said she didn't reference the future roads network when putting this together but needed to figure out where the SE Connector would be there. That played into the south St. Francis connector. That was a high priority.

C. Update on Mt. Chal Acquisition

Ms. Baker said this was a project staff had worked on for over 10 years. She realized this COLTPAC had not had much discussion on it and wanted to educate the Committee on what it was and determine how to move forward. They had over \$1 million tied up in this project but had not been able to complete it.

Dr. Mills described the location north of Cerrillos and west of Hwy 14. It was surrounded by federal land except to the south which was owned by an individual who did gravel mining. Access was through the State Park on a road through the private property. Their GIS maps hadn't caught up with reality.

Ms. Baker explained that Mt. Chal was the internationally famous turquoise mine, hence the name. There was also lead on the property which provided for lead glazed pueblo pottery. There were also some environmentally significant issues. The mines were enhanced over the years. There were lead tailings on the property. There were mining claims on it. Staff had sorted through those issues. It was once owned by a mining syndicate. She thought they now had that sorted out. There were some overlapping mining claims and a missing mining claim that was not pinned on the ground. There were encroachments from Silver Hills subdivision.

There was questionable legal access to it through the park. It was old State Road 10. The County maintained it up to the 1970's. Then they abandoned maintenance of that road. So there were questions on access. The road followed the arroyo and the tailings followed the arroyo so the road was contaminated by lead tailings.

The yellow part on her map was BLM land but this was the part to the south.

Ms. Baker said it was owned by Mr. Aiken and mined in the 1990's. He had a 3 acre permit for gravel and he kept moving the 3 acres around and finally the NMED shut him down. He appealed but lost. He was supposed to reclaim the land but has not. He had not been an easy partner to deal with. There were significant historic areas on the property.

Vice Chair Kowalski asked about the Quintana claim.

Ms. Baker said that complicated it.

Mr. Baxter said there were clearly contaminants on that property.

Ms. Baker agreed. There were 40 wells drilled that had to be closed to prevent ground water contamination. The County owned the green area on the map.

Mr. Stovall asked why the county would want that liability.

Ms. Baker thought that was a good question. She said it would cost about \$623,000 for remediation. The proposal was not to clean it up to standards but to a monitored condition for visitors. The EPA contractor had lower estimates.

Mr. Baxter said the Coalition wanted the acquisition to happen and to get it cleaned up for public use.

Mr. Baxter said he could arrange for a visit to the site if COLTPAC wanted one.

Ms. Baker explained that part of the reason the estimate was not higher was that they were not removing all contamination but moving it all to one place. She didn't know how deep the contamination was but it had not migrated.

Mr. Rogers said there were significant historical sites in the red area. The pueblos used the turquoise mine there. It was significant and extremely important property.

Mr. Patrick said TPL worked on a bunch of mines up in Colorado. They would go in and buy most of them but leave one or two mining claims to the seller. He didn't know if that could be done here.

Ms. Baker guessed they could try.

Mr. Baxter said the first developer was the first mayor of Santa Fé (Thornton) and later became governor. The lead mine was also a silver mine. The two really old Native American silver mines were developed around 1320-1325 just south of this parcel. They were jewels of New Mexico's minerals.

Mr. Patrick asked where the project was now.

Ms. Baker said NMED approved the remediation plan and had 2 Environmental Assessments, one of which EPA paid for. They needed to decide soon if they wanted to purchase and enter a voluntary remediation plan which would give protection from liability while remediating. They had a little over \$1 million that COLTPAC allocated for it. They were maybe \$200,000 shy of acquisition and remediation costs but might be okay. It was a question of whether the county had the confidence to take on that liability and the responsibility of adding almost a thousand acres for intense management.

Mr. Stovall asked what staff was asking from the Committee.

Ms. Baker wanted them to keep it in mind

Dr. Mills asked if the statute of limitations had run out.

Ms. Baker said it was done in 2001.

Mr. Baxter recalled it was one of their first items. It was still the prize everyone was looking for. And the conflict with gravel pit owner and threat of court actions was part of it.

Ms. Baker said the money was creatively set aside and was not bond money. The Committee needed to figure out what to do on it one way or another. So far they had spent \$70,000 on it. Staff wanted to subtract the remediation costs from the appraised value. They had an appraisal right now but it considered that there was access and subtracted out remediation as we know it.

Mr. Stovall suggested it come back for review and possible action later.

Mr. Patrick would like to get out and see it.

Mr. Baxter said that was easily done. It was appropriate to advise the Commissioners on it.

Ms. Baker said part of problem was to determine how to move forward. It was a political decision and she was not sure the Commissioners were ready to take it on.

Mr. Baxter said at such time it might become Cerrillos State Park and would do wonders for people far away.

Ms. Baker said Rhonda King was getting re-engaged in it and that might help.

Mr. Rogers asked if in COLTPAC history there had ever been an approval by Commissioners on a COLTPAC recommendation that was vacated later.

Ms. Baker said there were - one at Golondrinas, the Little Tesuque project changed a little and the Vista Grande collapsed because the owners pulled out. She didn't think any had ever been reversed.

Mr. Patrick asked if the Committee would have to make a new recommendation to the BCC. Ms. Baker agreed.

Vice Chair Kowalski thought they should go see it and then vote to go forward or not.

Dr. Mills asked the Committee if the visit was best in evening or morning or on a weekend.

Mr. Baxter said it would take 2-3 hours to do it thoroughly.

Mr. Baxter suggested they could do it more than once.

Mr. Stovall wondered if they should wait until it cooled off.

Mr. Patrick thought September might be better.

Vice Chair Kowalski preferred morning to evening.

Mr. Baxter said there were local pueblos that had gone there on a pilgrimage every year - some of it privately.

Ms. Baker said they were trying to figure out.

Vice Chair Kowalski asked that they find a date to go in September.

D. Update on Lower Parking Lot Construction at Arroyo Hondo Open Space

Dr. Mills showed the map. She said that Allison Moore had worked on it. It involved restoration of the area in the arroyo shown in green. It had a wetland area that needed restoration. The other part was to create a parking lot from Arroyo Hondo Road. They contracted with Riverbed Engineering to do the engineering.

There were three different alternatives on where to put the parking lot. She pointed out the historic acequia. The first choice would have to take out a hill for line of site. The second would be to come behind the embankment close to the acequia. And the third was to go further down and run the acequia underneath the parking. The second choice was the community's choice as well as staff's. The construction would run in tandem with the wetlands restoration.

Ms. Baker said the wetlands would be started first. Parking would be separate construction.

Mr. Baxter asked if the locals were in favor of gating.

Dr. Mills said the few who came out wanted a gate.

Mr. Johnson said the upper was gated with solar gating.

Ms. Baker said it was actually on a timer. There was a trip on the way out.

Mr. Johnson asked if the wetlands would happen this fall.

Ms. Baker said it would depend on moisture levels.

Dr. Mills pointed out the trail head across the arroyo.

E. San Pedro -

Dr. Mills reported that the project was completed.

F. Connection of Dale Ball Trails with Forest Service

Dr. Mills reported that the agreement was drafted. There would be a series of meetings with Commissioners this week to focus on that and take their questions and concerns. Her goal, if legal cooperated, was to take the project to BCC on August 30 for approval of the purchase agreement. The appraisal came in at a little over \$1 million for the 50 acres and the County would purchase it for \$125,000 with additional easements to connect to Little Tesuque Open Space.

Mr. Johnson noted it was steep terrain and would be a challenge to construct. It went right down into Little Tesuque Creek area.

G. Other Matters

Mr. Stovall asked at what point he could put in his wish list for the next bond sale.

Dr. Mills invited him to start now and submit them by email.

Ms. Baker said they had a capital projects list but there were other things not on that list. They needed to work on it now.

Mr. Montoya asked about the trail from the Santa Fé River to Agua Fria Park.

Ms. Baker said from the end of Frenchy's to Siler Road they had under design and were wrestling with acquisition of property. Beyond Siler were about 50 small parcels of long lots to the San Isidro Crossing. It would be a long process. They were hiring a project manager for the river now so they would have another person working on it.

Mr. Montoya thought the City did a great job up to Frenchy's.

Ms. Baker agreed. They worked with the City on it. It wasn't part of the Spanish Land Grant so the City claimed ownership and consequently didn't have to acquire private property to complete the trail.

8. ACTION ITEMS

There were no action items.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Having completed the agenda and with no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Approved by:



Judy Kowalski, Vice Chair



Submitted by:




Carl Boaz, Stenographer

COUNTY OF SANTA FE)
STATE OF NEW MEXICO) ss

COLTPAC MINUTES
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I Hereby Certify That This Instrument Was Filed for
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Deputy  _____
Witness My Hand And Seal Of Office
Valerie Espinoza
County Clerk, Santa Fe, NM

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