

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

Thursday, May 21, 2009

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

A regular meeting of the Santa Fe 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 Chair Matthew McQueen.

Roll Call indicated the presence of a quorum as follows:

Members Present

Matthew McQueen, Chair
Sam Pallin, Vice Chair
Brent Bonwell
Todd Brown
Jack Frost
LouAnn Hunt
Jan-Willem Jansens
Sandra Massengill [arriving later]
Jerry Rogers [arriving later]
Scott Stovall

Members Absent

Martin Gabaldon
Stephen Schoninger

Staff Members Present

Colleen Baker
Scott Kaseman
Beth Mills
Charles Gonzales

Others Present

Bill Baxter

2. ASSIGNMENT OF ALTERNATES

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Dr. Mills asked to discuss the tour to petroglyph hill under site visits.

Dr. Pallin asked of add meeting site changes

Chair McQueen put it under Matters from the Committee.

Mr. Rogers moved to approve the Agenda as amended. Mr. Stovall seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous voice vote.

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES – APRIL 2009

Chair McQueen noted that under Members Present, they were missing Mr. Frost's name at the last meeting. He was not present. He said that Bill Johnson was present but Bill Baxter was not.

On page 3, Chesny should be Petchesky.

On page 6 under Matters from the Committee, there should be a heading there for the discussion on the Petchesky property.

The statement about the \$600,000 didn't seem to make sense. He asked that the statement be deleted from the minutes.

Dr. Mills noted that Colleen Baker and Allison Moore's names were switched in the minutes. She added that if she was referred to as Dr. Mills, then Sam Pallin should be referred to as Dr. Pallin.

Dr. Pallin moved to approve the April minutes as amended. Mr. Bonwell seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous voice vote.

5. MATTERS FROM OPEN SPACE AND TRAILS STAFF

Ms. Baker introduced Charles Gonzales as the newest staff member, as Maintenance Technician. She said she was glad to have him on board. He came from PNM, and most recently was building houses. He had lots of experience.

A. Schedule for Site Visits

Dr. Mills had a tentative schedule. There was one change already and she was open for suggestions or changes. She didn't think they should look at the Rail Trail trail head on June 6 because Allison Moore was not available that day and it would be helpful to have her there.. She suggested adding that as soon as possible.

The Committee agreed to swap the June and July visit locations.

Chair McQueen said the first site visit had a low attendance. They had some committee members and some community members and it was a good visit but he

would like to have had more people.

Dr. Mills thought it was great for Mr. Kaseman to have folks engaged and helpful to hear comments from committee members and get reactions. It is very useful for staff and would be no problem to continue that.

Dr. Pallin said he and his wife stopped at all three trailheads on their way home. He thanked Mr. Baxter for being there.

Chair McQueen asked how far ahead she wanted to plan them.

Dr. Mills said after the first few here it would depend on what the Committee wanted. She was beginning to think that putting Cieneguita trailheads and the Galisteo preserve trails would be a good trip. The trails at Galisteo were best for equestrian access. She was anxious for members to see those new trails.

Mr. Brown thought they could still do petroglyph hill too.

Dr. Mills agreed. Some folks were coming in on Aug 23rd. If there was a lot of interest with the Committee they might have to do it separately. On Aug 23rd she wanted to open it up to the public because there were two out-of-state people asking for on the 23rd.

Ms. Baker favored separate date since the 23rd was a Sunday and it would be limited to ten people.

Mr. Brown asked if members could sign up. Dr. Mills agreed but said she wanted to maximize public participation.

Mr. Brown said that as manager of Ortíz Mountain he would have to clear Oct 3rd with Minerals for the site visit.

Mr. Baxter said the present conservation easements were managed by the Santa Fe Botanical Garden. As a courtesy they had been clearing any events with Minerals. Although there was no requirement but the practice was used so much that they were beginning to feel they were controlling access.

Mr. Brown agreed. He added that it was 4 wheel drive territory but the clearing with them was just a courtesy.

Mr. Rogers asked if having just ten was an established policy.

Dr. Mills said it was not. She was just using ten as an experiment with the public. For parking and for impact she thought it would be about the right size.

Mr. Baxter said when they had 36 they decided not to go clear to the petroglyphs.

Mr. Rogers thought ten was a little too restrictive.

Mr. Baxter thought they were in the right ballpark with ten from the public and 5-6 from COLTPAC.

Dr. Mills thought it should be conservative because it was steep, precarious, easy to dislodge rocks, and a pretty fragile place.

The Committee noted several competing events on June 6th and Dr. Mill asked if the 7th would be better. The members did not appear to favor that change.

Dr. Mills said they would proceed with visiting Rio En Medio and Chimayó on June 6th, 10-12.

Mr. Jansens suggested they notify the Chimayó youth conservation group for a project for the future. They were looking for a large coalition for a project there.

Mr. Brown asked if they could slip in Cerrillos Park on Nov 7th.

Mr. Brown asked when the parking area was going in at Arroyo Hondo.

Mr. Kaseman said it would be very soon as everything was ready to go.

Dr. Mills summarized the site visits that included Rio en Medio/Chimayó on June 6th, Rail Trail and Galisteo on July 11, and then sort out the rest as they went.

Chair McQueen said they would circulate the revised schedule and maps.

Dr. Pallin asked that Aug 23rd also be on the schedule. Dr. Mills agreed.

B. Discussion of Acquisition Process for Remaining Bond Funds

Dr. Mills apologized for the title. What she intended was a discussion on the entire process for the way projects came forward. The resolution that described the way it was currently done was emailed to all the members. There was a possibility of examining the way properties come in and revising it. COLTPAC had been in a reactive mode and it might be better to be proactive to determine the properties the Committee wanted to acquire. Then they could do a new vision for it.

Dr. Pallin thought the proactive process already started in Chair McQueen's presentation about the property near Edgewood.

Ms. Baker agreed that the Ananda acquisition was the beginning. The program

initially was set up to receive applications and consider them so a mechanism was set up to review them. They put a timetable on it so they wouldn't have to continually review them. The whole framework was receptive to applications. No mechanism was set up for them to go out and explore properties they wanted. They did that with the river properties. They went after those and after trail easements. But the resolution didn't speak to that. It was not set up to handle those that staff or members wanted to go after. It seemed like a good discussion to have for the remaining bond monies or any other bonds they got.

Dr. Pallin thought they just needed to insert a paragraph that COLTPAC could make applications.

Ms. Baker said that was already in there but the way it was set up; they could only review applications once a year.

Chair McQueen noted they had different processes for different sources of money. They had permission from legislature for the river acquisition. GRT funds were different too. He reviewed how the process had worked in the past. They had not been very successful at it. They had tried to set a schedule but had not followed it in the last few years.

Ms. Baker said staff told people they had to get their applications in within that time frame. She agreed they had not advertised it.

Mr. Jansens went back to the vision he heard here. A more strategic, geographically strategic to complement dispersal in relation to open areas and trails. With the completion of the Growth Management Plan, they had a huge opportunity now where a lot of inventory was being done. Besides that, a needs assessment might benefit more neighborhoods. The phasing of those projections of needs provided interesting tools with staff and other agencies and communities who have chimed in on the planning process. There were gems out there the COLTPAC could acquire. He proposed they pursue that.

Mr. Stovall asked if the applications went through staff first. Ms. Baker said they did in order to review to make sure they were complete.

Mr. Stovall asked if there was a set of regulations or criteria.

Ms. Baker explained that it was laid out in the resolution.

Chair McQueen clarified that it was a technical review - not an evaluation of merits.

Mr. Stovall asked if that meant that comparing it to the Master Plan was a function of the committee.

Ms. Baker agreed. What they were trying to do was a better sense of what those evaluations were throughout the County. What needed to be protected in open space and trails. They needed to make sure the procedures would facilitate that.

Mr. Stovall asked if multiple applications were prioritized through a vote.

Ms. Baker said that only happened at the beginning. Since then they rarely had more than one or two to consider. The last time they advertised was about 2004.

Chair McQueen added that there were times when they had as many as ten and did an elaborate review and scoring on how people felt. The Commission largely followed the recommendations.

Chair McQueen thought last time they saw it, they still had available funds. The bond was about \$600,000. They only had money for one or two so he questioned the rationale for doing any advertising.

Dr. Pallin said they had three from the Committee.

Chair McQueen said they were going to have a presentation but it was held off until they decided this.

Chair McQueen liked what Mr. Jansens said but thought they needed to be somewhat opportunistic. It made sense to find out where the holes were. He mentioned that there were places that were important, one particularly on the Santa Fe River, and the owner wanted twice what it was worth so he didn't think they should pursue it.

Mr. Jansens added that the Growth Management Plan might make restrictions on those places. So they needed to use some GIS layers overlaying conservation and have some layer where they identified places. Despite the Growth Management Plan, they should protect some view sheds from development; as an opportunity for public use. Buying some of those thru COLTPAC might make the cost less. Flood zones were being updated right now. Certain land owners might see the opportunities going down and selling to the County would be beneficial.

Dr. Mills said she created a conservation layer as an open space layer - a wildlife corridor and just received it. She had this wonderful outline from the consultant to fill in. As that work comes together and analyzed, it would come back to this Committee. What she would need from the Committee was for the members to look at it and comment on its value.

Mr. Bonwell asked how they could change this process so they could target properties and determine what an acquisition would look like. He thought they needed to change the process to be goal oriented. The process should help them achieve those goals. Right now it was supposedly a once a year process.

Mr. Stovall asked if after the GMP approval, the Committee would be informed about what was in it.

Dr. Mills agreed that was needed to be built into the process.

Mr. Frost said they should not presume what the plan would actually look like until it happened and then make recommendations on it. The plan might or might not allow you to achieve what you want to do.

Ms. Baker agreed and said that was why they were trying to capture it in COLTAC's own plan.

Dr. Pallin thought they needed to come up with revisions that would help these move smoothly through the calendar. The system needed to be created and approved by Commissioners.

Ms. Baker summarized she heard that the Committee needed the: ability to respond to opportunities and also establish provisions for being able to be more directive. She suggested they could get 2-3 people with time and interest and have them review it and make suggestions.

Chair McQueen commented that they used to have a lot of money and not much property so they started buying. There wasn't a focus on the Santa Fe River. Now they had moved forward and didn't have a lot of money but did have a lot of property so maybe they should go back to ones they bought and make the process better.

Because they didn't have lots of money left, the formal process was potentially unduly burdensome. They should just move forward on the good projects. Then maybe look at it again. He didn't want to get too bogged down with the resolution but agreed what they did need to go to the Commission. So he felt they should just deal with them as they came with the remaining \$600,000.

Ms. Baker's concern was the next bond issue in November 2012. She appreciated not getting bogged down but they needed to keep their sights on reframing the acquisition process anyway. There might be a separate short-term solution for the \$600,000.

Dr. Mills thought they probably should revisit a lot of things including the vision statement and the way they evaluated properties. That might inform some of the rest of it. It was more than adding a paragraph to the current resolution.

Ms. Baker said a review was definitely needed b the immediate issue was what they should do now in order to spend the \$600,000 in the next month. She suggested perhaps a very sort resolution for an interim process. She was not sure what the Commission would agree to approve.

Dr. Pallin asked if both could be one in one document.

Ms. Baker said they could but it was a limited time issue.

The Committee briefly discussed what approvable time schedules they could establish.

Mr. Jansens moved to create a subcommittee of 2-3 persons to create an amendment to the resolution that would include quarterly approval of acquisition applications, report back to Committee for a vote and forward for Commission approval. Mr. Stovall seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous voice vote.

Chair McQueen appointed Mr. Frost, Mr. Jansens and himself along with staff members, Ms. Baker and Dr. Mills.

C. Program Updates: Rail Trail, Rabbit Road to City Line, Other

Dr. Mills reported that Ms. Moore passed along a statement regarding the Rail Trail and how it would be advertised. They got \$100,000 stimulus money to connect the City's portion and also the trailhead at Rabbit Road. They were currently in contact with the City Engineer for work on the construction. She explained that the developer ran out of money and could not do it.

Ms. Baker said that Mark Tibbetts helped them get that \$100,000.

Mr. Bonwell asked if the easement transfer at Galisteo Basin happened.

Dr. Mills said they were still working out the legal transfer for the easiest way to do that.

Mr. Brown was worried about the money they would be spent only on trail head for the Rail Trail, noting they lost the \$300,000 that had been allocated for it.

Ms. Baker agreed that they lost it in that fiscal year and were trying to get it back now. She had been told there was \$600,000 in the State's Trail Improvement budget but was not available until 2012. So she was going ahead with the construction but the procurement folks were not happy with it. She was budgeting GRT revenues to cover it now and trying to get the FHWA back into the process. There was still the \$600,000 in the budget. There was also \$150,000 for signage on the Rail Trail.

Dr. Mills reported the rest of the statement from Ms. Moore that dealt with Arroyo Hondo and Peñasco Blanco where fencing was being put in to prevent dumping. For

National Trails Day they were partnering with SFCT near Site Santa Fe with information on trails. She showed a preliminary map. She was focusing on growth management plan revisions for trails and open space provisions.

The Committee briefly discussed the Arroyo Hondo parking lots.

6. MATTERS FROM THE COMMITTEE

A. New Mexico Land Trust Presentation of Petchesky Ranch Property – McQueen

Chair McQueen clarified that it was the New Mexico Land Conservancy not the Land Trust. They were not present at this meeting but wanted to do a presentation at the next meeting. The next meeting was June 18th. They would present and the Committee could report. There would be more about that at the next meeting. He said it involved a couple hundred acres. There were six acres they would not part with and that was the ranch headquarters.

Mr. Jansens announced they would have a public opening on June 13th.

Mr. Stovall asked if it was in the Growth Management Plan.

Chair McQueen said it was, in the College District. He said they would like to sell the property. It had a conservation easement on it so the price was reduced 90%.

Ms. Baker added that Jane Petchesky had already donated a trail easement to the County along the edge of the property. If we could acquire the property they would not have to fence the trail off from the property. It was a conservation trust with a forest trust so not public access.

If the County purchased it, it would open it up for education etc. the Land Conservancy would continue to have their headquarters there but the reality was that you could see it from an airplane because of all the density of development all around it that would occur.

The Committee briefly discussed the appraisal of the property and what it might be worth.

Mr. Jansens asked that they compare it to other opportunities nearby.

B. Bachelor Draw (I-40) Easement – Pallin

Dr. Pallin provided a hand out and had a map on page two of I-40 and pointed out

the only practical place under I 40 for an easement that would allow equestrian and recreational traffic. He favored using this as a link the COLTPAC properties on the north side with multiple recreational properties south of Route 66. One could pass through that underpass right now to Sass and Area 32 which were recreational properties. It would also go further and access Area 34.

He reported that Ray Segers was working with owners to donate the easement. The property to the south was residential. They could not build in those washes so it would not detract from development. There was a flexible easement that could be moved later if needed.

If he could get them to donate, it would cost COLTPAC and Edgewood nothing unless they wanted to put up gates or other improvements of the trail. If not, they would have to decide if they wanted to participate on the basis of their proposal.

Mr. Frost asked if there were any costs for construction now.

Dr. Pallin said it was open but he didn't know how smooth. The other thing was that it was the only wildlife passage along there.

Ms. Baker said they had a template for a floating trail easement they could use in this case and should get it to him. It was intended for situations like this. She thought they should be in conversation with DOT because even though the underlying property was private, the I-40 DOT easement went over the top; it would be in the highway easement so they would have some jurisdiction.

She added that if it became a constructed trail, they might at some point in the future argue for a tunnel next-door to the arroyo. If the State did some work on I-40 there it might be feasible, if it ever got to be a big enough trail.

Mr. Rogers added that it would allow them to keep contact with wildlife at a minimum.

Ms. Hunt explained that the Sass Building was their headquarters.

Dr. Pallin said that once the links were connected, the system would go from 32 and 34 south of 66 north to the 30 acre trail head and north on Horton Road all the way to Frost Road and then to South Mountain to connect with all of this. So the trail would go from the Santa Fe Community College to Bernalillo County.

Ms. Hunt said SASS owned big acreage next to 32. They had their World Championship there in June with a trail ride and a western culture aspect. This would be instrumental there.

Chair McQueen noted there were lots of details to work out but it was wonderful to

have Committee members bringing projects and working on them.

Mr. Jansens asked what liability was there in owning an easement in an arroyo with 100 year flood impact on users.

Chair McQueen noted they already owned some elsewhere.

Mr. Gonzales said DOT would have all the answers to those questions.

Ms. Baker said so far, all they were required to do was signage. It was certainly something to be aware of but they were taking precautions on it.

C. Meeting Locations

The Committee discussed having their meetings in diverse locations.

Dr. Pallin asked if they could schedule a visit to the 32 area and have a meeting at Sass headquarters.

Mr. Baxter thought they might get some locals attending there.

Mr. Stovall moved to have a meeting in each of the sections of the County at least once a year. Dr. Pallin seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous voice vote.

Chair McQueen asked that staff follow up on that and consult with the community for specific locations. He offered to arrange for one at the Galisteo Community Center.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Stovall asked if there were trail maps available yet.

Dr. Mills said they were working on them and anticipated having them done soon.

8. ADJOURN

Having completed the agenda and with no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Approved by:

Submitted by:

Matthew McQueen, Chair

Carl Boaz, Stenographer