



MEETING OF THE PARKS & OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

BOULDER COUNTY, COLORADO

Regular Meeting Minutes

**April 25, 2024, 6:30 p.m.
Third Floor Hearing Room
County Court House
1325 Pearl Street, Boulder**

Members Present: Janet George
Tony Lewis
Trace Baker
Paula Fitzgerald
Drew Adams
Jackson Moller (arrived 6:34 p.m.)
Kristine Johnson (arrived 6:43 p.m.)
Derek Turner
Carol Byerly

-
- 1. Call to Order**
 - 2. Roll Call**
 - 3. Approval of Last Month's Minutes**

Moved by Paula Fitzgerald

Seconded by Trace Baker

Derek Turner abstained.

APPROVED

4. Presentations

4.1 Elk Tracks Acquisition

Staff Presenter: Aaron Clark, Land Officer

Action Requested: Recommendation to BOCC

Public Comment: None

Q: The road in the satellite image, is there a physical barrier to prevent access?

Response: Off Hwy 72, most of the property line is fenced. There is a small gap to allow vehicles.

Moved by Carol Byerly

Seconded by Trace Baker

APPROVED

4.2 Loveland Property Acquisition

Staff Presenter: Aaron Clark, Land Officer

Action Requested: Recommendation to BOCC

Public Comment: None

Q: Is the road connected to USFS Trails?

Response: It is an old USFS road, but it trails off into nothing. We've seen hikers, but you couldn't get a vehicle up there.

Moved by Trace Baker

Seconded by Paula Fitzgerald

APPROVED

4.3 Mariposa Passage Acquisition

Staff Presenter: Melissa Arnold, Land Officer

Action Requested: Recommendation to BOCC

Public Comment: None

Q: There were some written public comments concerning this acquisition. Can you address those?

Response: Our Forestry staff is planning to do data collection and outreach this summer, before starting forestry work. A Forestry Plan will be written and an interdisciplinary team will be formed to look at the project.

Q: There was another concern about illegal access.

Response: These are generally issues that get handled by staff after the acquisition, but our staff is very aware of the issues and plan to add signs and patrols of the area.

Q: It's not clear if there will be public access.

Response: The property itself won't be closed, so if someone can get there through legal means (such as walking through the Tucker open space property) they can access it. They won't be able to access the property via West 1st Street.

Moved by Jackson Moller

Seconded by Trace Baker

APPROVED

4.4 Spruce Gulch Conservation Easement Acquisition

Staff Presenter: Melissa Arnold, Land Officer

Action Requested: Recommendation to BOCC

Public Comment: None

Q: Can you give us an idea of what portion of the annual budget for acquisitions this requires and what remains for the rest of the year?

Response: Our budget varies from year to year. This we have almost \$19 million, so this is \$7.3M of that.

Q: What is the timeline for the gift to CU?

Response: We are working with the university to synchronize our closings. It's not imperative that they close at the same time, but the CE does need to close first. Then the land would be conveyed to the university. We are targeting the end of July.

Moved by Janet George

Seconded by Kristine Johnson

APPROVED

4.5 Alexander Dawson-2024 United Power Easement Taking

Staff Presenter: Don Durso, Land Officer

Action Requested: Recommendation to BOCC

Public Comment: Janis Whisman spoke on behalf of a member of the public who owns property near Alexander Dawson. The landowner has concerns about a possible disturbance on her own property. Don Durso will speak to with United Power about these concerns.

Q: Is this primarily to provide an upgrade to Alexander Dawson?

Response: This is more of a systemwide upgrade.

Q: Does this work involve trying to bury lines to reduce fire risk?

Response: They have decided to keep the overhead line.

Moved by Paula Fitzgerald

Seconded by Janet George

APPROVED

4.6 US Highway 36 Wildlife Crossing Project

Staff Presenter: Susan Spaulding, Environmental Resources Specialist

Action Requested: Information Only

No Public Comment was given at the meeting.

Q: How does this align with the migration of animals? Are those locations appropriate for migrating herds?

Response: We know where they cross. Those locations are not necessarily correlated to open space; these are based on existing infrastructure or topography. We will look at existing data and listen to the experts on the best places for the crossings.

Q: Are you looking at different crossings for different species?

Response: We are considering small creatures, including aquatic and semiaquatic.

Q: Will a passing allow elk to come onto private property to potentially cause damage?

Response: The consultants will look at this. The elk are coming across anyway, so we will need to look at fencing and other methods to lessen the impact to private property.

Q: How will this integrate with the Bikeway Feasibility Study?

Response: We've been involved from the get-go with the Bikeway Feasibility Study and we'll coordinate with CPP moving forward.

Q: What is the timeframe?

Response: We plan to apply for federal funds by July or August. Those funds won't be available until 2027.

Q: How can POSAC help and support this effort?

Response: We'll need the public involved on all levels. We will keep communicating and perhaps implement outreach programs.

Q: I would think an underpass would be an easier sell to landowners in that area.

Response: We have considered the scenic impacts, but some species aren't served well with an underpass. Public outreach will be key.

4.7 US Highway 36/North Foothills Bikeway Feasibility Study

Staff Presenter: Alexandra Phillips, County Bike Planner

Action Requested: Information Only

Public Comment: None

Q: If a car hits a barrier, could the car be deflected back into car or bike traffic and cause an accident?

Response: That could be a concern. There are already guardrails in that area that could deflect if hit. CDOT doesn't want too many barriers. The more barriers and walls, the more infrastructure.

Q: Have you thought about outreach so cyclists will use this bikeway and use it safely?

Response: We meet regularly with cycling groups and some of them do want the 36 shoulder to stay open to bikes so that they can continue to ride as they do now.

Q: Will the bikeway be open to all classes of ebikes?

Response: Yes, it will be open to all ebikes.

Q: Will pedestrians be excluded?

Response: No, pedestrians will be allowed on the bikeway.

4.8 County-wide Housing Update

Staff Presenters: Susana Lopez-Baker, Housing and Human Services Deputy Director and Interim Executive Director Boulder County Housing Authority, and Bill Cole, Housing Partnership and Policy Manager

Action Requested: Information Only

Public Comment: None

Q: Is there any momentum toward building more mobile home communities? What are the barriers in building these new communities?

Response: Resident-owned units is the model where the county has the most control over costs. We see very high infrastructure costs in building mobile home parks. New units are running \$120,000-130,000. Once you add the cost of the

infrastructure and the pad, you're looking at \$150,000 per unit. Those would need to be heavily subsidized to make them affordable.

Q: I sense that there is an acute need for agricultural housing this year. Is there anything that can be done this year?

Response: I don't know that we have good answers to your question. The farmers gave us this dire prediction in February, which doesn't give us a lot of time to react. The Housing department didn't see a copy of the letter from POSAC that was sent to the Board of County Commissioners.

Q: What next steps do you foresee for our local farm workers?

Response: Working with Housing to open some of their properties to farm workers is the likely next step. I don't see us being able to build or renovate housing this year on any of our properties. We'll also speak more with our farmers to see if this is really the last year if a solution isn't found or is there more time to address this problem. Adrian Card with Extension has just released an Ag Housing survey. Hopefully there will be more data and business intelligence that comes from the survey that can inform the next steps.

POSAC asked for a study session to further discuss this issue.

5. Public Comment Period for Items Not on Agenda

None

6. POSAC Members Comment Period for Items Not on Agenda

Kristine Johnson: She commented that she has signed up to be a Weed Warrior with Boulder County Parks & Open Space. She thought the training was excellent and she encourages others to volunteer.

7. Director's Update

- POSAC was invited to attend the BCPOS All Staff Workday in May.
- POSAC Field Trips are being planned over the coming months and will be announced.
- LoBo Trail work is happening in the Niwot area.

- Work on the Coalton Trail is complete.
- The CEMEX Plant will be closed. Boulder County has the option to buy the property. The presentation should come to POSAC later this year.
- The annual Senior Fish-off at Walden Ponds is this Friday.
- The next Astronomy Night on Open Space is May 3 at Ron Stewart Preserve at Rabbit Mountain. bouldercounty.gov/events/astronomy-night-sky-neighbors/
- Youth Corps crew member positions are open.
- BCPOS Agriculture leasing criteria was rewritten this year to be more inclusive. Recently, Off Beet Farm was selected to lease the James Construction property, near Jay Rd. and Spine.

8. Adjournment

9:43 p.m.

This is only a summary of the meeting. The meeting video is viewable on the [POSAC webpage](#).