MINUTES
OPEN SPACE AND TRAILS BOARD
REGULAR SESSION
June 7, 2022
530 East Main St. Aspen, CO 81611
Zoom Video Conference

OSTB Present:

Graeme Means Dist. 1	Howie Mallory Dist. 2 Not Present	Amy Barrow Dist. 3	Michael Kinsley Dist. 4	Wayne Ives Dist. 5, Chair

Staff Present: Gary Tennenbaum, Kim Arensdorf, Paul Holsinger, Jessie Young, Liza Mitchell, Dale Will, Janet Urquhart, Carly Klein, Richard Neiley

Others Present: Patrick Rawley

Wayne Ives called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT
No public comment

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Graeme Means motioned for the OSTB to approve the 05/05/2022 OSTB Regular and Executive Session Draft Minutes, and the 05/16/2022 OSTB Special Meeting / Site Tour Draft Minutes. Michael Kinsley seconded. Motion passed (4-0).

Land Use Referral – Glen Dee Road
Jessie Young provided the Growth Management Quota System (GMQS) as it relates to Open Space and Trails. She explained that the purpose of GMQS is to manage the rate, type, location, quality, and ultimate quantity of growth in the rural and urban areas of unincorporated Pitkin County. Young noted that the system is a competition. The categories of GMQS include; Trails and Transit, Open Space and Trails, Environmental Water Quality and Wildlife Habitat.

Paul Holsinger explained that the applicant competing in the GMQS process to acquire additional 1,000 sq. ft. of residential floor area and offering a $10k donation to OST to support the acquisitions of conservation easements throughout the County. The property is within the Aspen Highland Village in the R-30 zone district (Suburban Density Residential – 30,000 sf lots) and contains approximately 1 acre with a 2,000 sq. ft. home and 1,200 sq. ft. detached garage. The application proposes 2,400 sq. ft. addition to the existing residence and 1,000 sq. ft. net livable CDU above a reconstructed garage for a total floor area of 6,673 sq. ft.

Holsinger provided the other donations within the application:
- Fire Protection - $10,000 donation to the Aspen Fire Protection District.
- Road System - $10,000 donation to Road and Bridge to support the Maroon Creek Pedestrian Safety Enhancements.

- Transit and Trails System: $5,000 donation to the City of Aspen Parks and Open Space to support the Maroon Creek Trail connection. – The City of Aspen is not accepting the donation.
- Transit and Trails System: $25,000 donation to We-Cycle for 10 new e-bikes at the Maroon Creek Road/Hwy 82 roundabout.
- $5,000 donation to the Watershed Biodiversity Initiative (WBI) to support their "roll up" mapping efforts. - WBI is not accepting the donation.
- Additional commitments included assisting ACES in locating and sponsoring summer lodging for naturalists in 2022 and helping

Gary Tennenbaum stated that what needs to be considered by the Board is the proportionality of the donations in relation to real estate values, and whether the donation is acceptable. He noted that the County will be discussing growth management in the near future.

Holsinger noted that within GMQS applications if there is determined to be no Open Space value, the applicant automatically gets 2 points.

Patrick Rawley, the applicant's representative, commented that due to increasing real estate values there has been an increase in GMQS applications. He reviewed the application's commitments and noted that the applicant would like to contribute to community projects. Total planned floor area will be 6,673 sq. ft. The residence architecture will be unobtrusive and minimally visible from Maroon Creek Road, he said. Additionally, the residence will be utilized by two families, rather than the two families having separate homes and increasing their impact. Rawley stated that the best effort was made to determine proportionality on this application.

Tennenbaum provided Howie Mallory's email comments stating that "The TDR program was designed for transferring development from rural areas to within the urban growth boundary. This property at the base of Highlands is a perfect receiving site especially as it already has zoning to allow such density. I don't think that OST should support the request but rather advise that the applicant purchase a TDR for its development plans. While the TDR program may need some revisions, it exists nevertheless for such a transfer of sq. ft. to the urban growth boundary areas. OST would be remiss to support the proposed GMQS application over recommending that the applicant use the TDR program."

Tennenbaum noted that the last GMQS application that was reviewed by the OSTB determined that the donation offered was not enough based on the development value today, however Planning and Zoning still accepted the donation and the applicant was awarded points.

Michael Kinsley stated that it is difficult for the Board and the applicant to determine proportionality. The County needs to develop a standard of proportionality and method of inflation. He proposed that the County use the last amount that was determined as proportional and acceptable and inflate that rate per sq. ft. bases to today's value.

Amy Barrow explained that today's value for an addition of 2,000 sq. ft. would be $2m for a TDR. The applicant is asking for 1,000 additional sq. ft. which would be equivalent to $1m for a TDR. They could then devalue based on the commitments to $750k due to the efforts made with the GMQS process. Richard Neiley explained that if the applicant purchased a TDR they would get an additional 1,000 sq. ft. that could be used in a future application, and the square footage would live with the property.

Graeme Means commented that the $10k offer is not enough with the current real estate market values. He stated that it is important to determine what market value the additional square footage would add to the property.

Holsinger explained that in the last GMQS application on Red Mountain the referral comment stated "The OSTB agrees with the applicant that there are no on-site opportunities to advance Open Space and Trails. Although the proposed $10k proposed donation is based on precedent from other financial contributions to the OST program the board considers this amount inadequate in relation to the proposed development." Wayne Ives recommended reusing the previous referral comments, however adding that Planning and Zoning needs to create the guidance for proportionality in order for the Board to make decisions.

Kinsley stated that the Board cannot conclude that the contribution is proportional as currently there is no method within the process to determine. Neiley explained that the code calls on the Board to use their discretion with respect to proportionality, however that is challenging due to the vast increase in current real estate value.

Board action below.

BOARD AND STAFF COMMENTS

Kinsley requested periodic updates in regards to the Board Retreat. Tennenbaum noted that information can be provided on the Board monthly updates.

Kinsley commented that the new Sky Mountain Park signs need to be more informative. Young explained that the new signage is focused on trail safety. The new signs are an initial burst to get trail users attention, and will be placed along with traditional informational signage. This will be coordinated with social media, she said.

Graeme Means suggested a Board site visit of Filoha Meadows Nature Preserve.

Tennenbaum commented on the Aspen Nordic Council conducting a future feasibility study for snowmaking on Nordic trails, which will be presented to the Board.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Amy Barrow motioned for the Open Space and Trails Board to enter into executive session in accordance with CRS 24-6-402(4) (a)(b) and (e) for the purpose of discussing acquisitions, attorney consultation and negotiations at 10:05 a.m. Michael Kinsley seconded. Motion passed (4-0).

JOINT OSTB – BOCC WORK SESSION
Commissioners Meeting Room; 530 E. Main St., Aspen

OSTB Trustees Present: Wayne Ives (Chair), Michael Kinsley**,** Amy Barrow, Graeme Means,

BOCC Present: Patty Clapper (Chair), Greg Poschman, Francie Jacober, Steve Child

Staff Present: Gary Tennenbaum, Jessie Young, Carly, Klein, Kim Arensdorf, Paul Holsinger, Ted O'Brien, Jon Peacock, Andrew Shewmaker

Others Present: Suzanne Stephens, Dave Erickson, Jeff Davlyn

Media Present: Grassroots TV

Patty Clapper called the joint work session to order at 10:40 a.m.

The entire joint work session meeting video is available from this link by selecting the meeting date: https://pitkincounty.ompnetwork.org/embed/sessions/247841/bocc-work-session-06-07-2022

Aspen Valley Land Trust Strategic Conservation Plan
Dale Will stated that AVLT's Strategic Conservation Plan takes a look at what lands need to be conserved for environmental purposes as well as raise awareness of conservation as a whole.

Suzanne Stevens and Dave Erickson provided details on AVLT's Strategic Conservation Plan, which relies on incentive based conservation values. Erickson provided information on AVLT's ongoing partnership with Pitkin County:

- AVLT and Pitkin County co-hold 24 Conservation Easements (CEs) totaling 6,810 acres
- AVLT holds 20 CEs on Pitkin owned properties totaling 2,780 acres
- Pitkin holds 1 CE on AVLT owned property totaling 142 acres(Coffman Ranch)
- We have worked together on transfers, trails easements, and conservation projects outside of Pitkin County

Erickson explained that the plan includes strategic conservation for wildlife and healthy ecosystems for communities, as well as building the next generation of land stewards. The plan ensures that AVLT is effective by prioritizing the following:

- A Vision for the Future: Creating a vision for success over the next 10 years that highlights the importance of private land conservation and connecting communities to nature.
- Landscape-Scale Conservation: Using a science-based approach that combines data with partner expertise to select projects with a focus on increasing climate resilience.
- Community-Driven Conservation: Identifying how to solve problems and addressing community needs. The importance of including equity and diversity.
- Strong Partnerships: Fostering collaborations with local nonprofits, governments, and land management agencies.

Erickson provided a map of AVLT's Service area, which covers over 2m acres and over 86k people.

AVLT's Plan process involved working with the community and partners to evaluate and implement solutions for climate change and biodiversity loss. Community engagement included focus groups, online/mailed surveys, public listening sessions and individual interviews. Targeted discussions with local non-profits, local government and agencies were conducted to determine the needs of the community and align municipality comprehensive plans. Key themes of the discussion were as follows:

- Landscape Conservation:
  - Protect agricultural land and wildlife habitat
  - Promote climate resilience and biodiversity by reducing carbon, and promoting stewardship

- Connection to Community:
  - Concern about affordable housing
  - Preserving community character
  - Expand community-conservation
  - Reduce barriers and advance equity
  - Create connection to place

Erickson provided the Conservation Plan 10 year goals:

- Open Space: Protect greenbelts between towns to preserve scenic values and community identity.
- Habitat: Protect natural landscapes and habitat corridors to preserve biodiversity and the ability to adapt to climate change.
- Working Lands: Help maintain local food production and rural character.
- Climate Resilience: Ensure that natural and human communities can mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change.
- Water: Preserve and restore wetlands and riparian areas to protect water quality.
- Equity: Expand outdoor access for communities with the highest need.
- Connection: Provide recreational and educational opportunities for local residence.

Erickson explained that the project selection approach determines first the priority and location of projects, second the challenges of the project, and finally how the project will be implemented. Additionally, evaluating the goal of connection, conservation, pinch points, overall landscape and future efforts.

Greg Poschman asked if the intent is to double the already 45k conserved acres. Yes, Erickson said. Poschman asked if AVLT foresees conflicts with the current need for housing. Erickson stated that open communication on projects and community information between agencies is essential. There is potentially opportunities for AVLT to advance affordable housing needs that is recognized within the Plan, he said.

Erickson explained that the individual priority analysis includes wildlife habitat connectivity, proximity to protected lands, riparian and wetland areas, agricultural lands and biodiversity. He provided conservation priority heat maps that analyzed agricultural lands, deer and elk winter range, and wetlands. The Resilient and Connected Lands map provided by The Nature

Conservancy depicts climate resilience and biodiversity throughout the United States. Lastly, the Watershed Biodiversity Initiative's conservation and restoration value map focuses on big game habitat and connectivity. Stephens noted that these maps show the importance of Pitkin County's help in conserving throughout the watershed.

Poschman asked about AVLT's confidence in protecting riparian and wetlands. Erickson stated that there are challenges, however utilizing tools to get information out to the community, along with youth outreach will help to have a greater impact.

Stephens stated that the goal of the Plan is to focus on strategic conservation by looking at issues and community projects. Will noted the importance of resilient partnerships.

Kinsley stated that the community needs to be as aggressive with affordable housing opportunities as it has been with preserving the environment. He asked about feedback from the different groups that AVLT had conversations with during this process. Erickson noted that the access to safe places, bilingual signage, and partnerships with the groups to access these spaces were among the conversation. Stephens stated that community focus groups were very grateful to be heard and want to see action. There is a need to take care of the people who will take care of the environment, so they can feel a connection to the place they live, she said. Patti Clapper stated that the youth is the greatest exposure.

Kinsley asked about connectivity in strategic places like Williams Hill and Light Hill and other wildlife crossings. Tennenbaum stated that from an infrastructure point of view for CDOT the Highway 82 corridor is not their highest priority, and the County and public would have to push heavily towards that project. Clapper noted that the Fertile Crescent connectivity could be address earlier than Highway 82 crossings.

Steve Child noted that a critical part of conservation is wildlife friendly fencing. He noted that the irrigation systems that have been put in place have created the microclimates for wildlife and should be considered.

Means asked how projects will factor in development. Stephens explained that key corridor connections are essential to consider with development.

Stephens noted that Pitkin County is partnering with AVLT on a Diversity Coordinator position.

Deer Creek Building Rehabilitation Budget Supplemental

Tennenbaum explained that the Deer Creek Open Space was acquired in 2015. The Management Plan identified the importance of the property's wildlife habitat and high conservation value. The property connects from the base of Arbaney Gulch to the Roaring Fork River.

Tennenbaum explained that at the time of the purchase Deer Creek OS had two housing units on the property, both of which were uninhabitable. The main house was leased to Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) and in exchange for the lease, CPW paid all the expenses to bring the house up to building code to house their Aspen based Division Wildlife Officer, Kurtis Tesch. This played a critical role in Kurtis' ability to stay in his position serving the upper Roaring Fork Valley. Tennenbaum stated that the other house on the property was built as a caretaker dwelling unit by the previous property owner. This unit has not been occupied for nearly a decade and now needs significant repairs, a new septic system, as well as reconnecting the house to the property's existing water well and electric service. OST included the potential use for this house in the recently adopted management plan for Deer Creek Open Space and a management action was included to look into the cost for rehabilitation in order to house a land management employee. OST has lost both maintenance and ranger staff in the past few years due to the housing challenges in the valley, he said.

Tennenbaum stated that to rehabilitate this caretaker unit the cost is estimated at $460k, which would be cheaper than building a new unit. Also included in the Board memo is other OST housing including:

- Emma Open Space (Restored by OST. Occupied by agricultural lessee)
- Lazy Glen Open Space (Renovated. Occupied by agricultural lessee)
- Wildin Open Space (Uninhabitable) – Need to evaluate through a Management Plan
- Glassier Open Space (Uninhabitable – undergoing historic designation as a prerequisite to seeking grant funding)
- Red Ridge Ranch (part of Glassier Open Space) - Potential to construct 2,000 sf residential unit reserved in purchase agreement/CE

Poschman asked if Deer Creek could support a modular unit. Tennenbaum stated that rehabilitation of the current unit would be the quickest and would be the least environmentally impacted option.

Kinsley asked what the current square footage vs allowable square footage of the unit at Deer Creek OS. Tennenbaum stated that currently the main house is approximately 2k sq. ft., and the caretaker unit is approximately 1k sq. ft. Under the County code the main house can be up to 5,750 as a single family unit, however being that the property is on critical habitat if you maximize the size there will be bigger impacts to the wildlife.

Child recommended utilizing solar energy where possible. Tennenbaum noted that staff is looking to do solar on both units.

Francie Jacober stated that housing opportunities should be looked into, however she recommended keeping the units at Deer Creek OS to the minimum square footage as the property is for wildlife conservation. Barrow agreed to renovate the existing shell and not bring in additional options.

Board action below.

BOARD ACTION

Land Use Referral – 315 Glen Dee Road

Graeme Means motioned to not accept the $10k donation for the 315 Glen Dee Road Land Use Application as it is inadequate in relation to the value of the respective development.

Additionally adding to the referral comments that the issue of proportionality should be addressed by Planning and Zoning, in which the OSTB can assist with that process. Amy Barrow seconded. Michael Kinsley opposed based on comments above. Motion passed (3-1).

Deer Creek Building Rehabilitation Budget Supplemental
Michael Kinsley motioned to approve the Deer Creek Building Rehabilitation Budget Supplemental. Amy Barrow seconded. Motion passed (4-0).

ADJOURN
The OSTB and Joint OSTB-BOCC meetings of June 7, 2022 adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Approved:

Wayne C. Ives
Wayne C. Ives (Aug 12, 2022 18:51 MDT)

Wayne Ives, Chair
Pitkin County Open Space & Trails Board

Attest:

Kim Arensdorf

Kimberly Arensdorf
Pitkin County Open Space & Trails
Administrative Specialist

2022.06.07 OSTB BOCC Joint Regular Minutes_Approved

Final Audit Report 2022-08-13

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