

**STEAMBOAT SPRINGS PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES**

September 13, 2017

The regularly scheduled public meeting of the Steamboat Springs Parks and Recreation Commission was called to order at approximately 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, September 13, 2017, in the Citizens' Meeting Room, Centennial Hall, 124 10th Street, Steamboat Springs, Colorado.

Parks and Recreation Commission members in attendance were
Chair Alan Koermer, Craig Keith, Sarah Floyd and Cady Watson.

Absent: Alfone, Tumminello, Weik

Staff members present were Director of Parks, Open Space and Recreational Services
John Overstreet and Staff Assistant Ally MacDougall.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Eric Meyer, 2775 Riverside Drive:
Almost \$1 million is a huge expense for the igloo. That City Council discussion was hard to watch.

New shade structure at Howelsen Hill: There's no master plan; there's other places like Bear River Bike Park where that shade structure is drastically needed for kids. I think we should focus our funds on places that have approved master plans and are ready to go.

Trail Building: The city getting into trail building kind of surprises me. About five years ago we encouraged them to be a part of getting the machines and just doing it. Routt County Riders was not a dual-division company back then. We've gone through a lot of steps to make that work really well for RCR even though that wasn't our goal, and now the city is doing trail work up on Emerald with machines and RCR wasn't involved. If you look at the budgets, I can't even believe that it would be cheaper. It's a half mile of trail that was left to build; about \$700 to rent the equipment. Looking at your fee study, that's approximately 10 hours of work for only the cheapest labor they have and a little bit of miscellaneous fuel or whatever. When you compare that \$1,000 to 10 hours of operator included with RCR, at least on paper it's \$750. So I really struggle with the budgeting, project management and decision making behind that. If there are other reasons why that happened that way and why RCR was never even consulted before the decision to move forward with city employees on that trail... RCR was told we couldn't use machines to build that trail, so we've been asking community members to come out and hand-build that trail throughout the summer. And all of a sudden, change of plans, no notice. That doesn't work well with asking volunteers to do something.

Meyer was asked for clarification on the igloo project.

Meyer: They're going to eliminate the existing building, (if I hear right,) buy a new structure. It went out to a modular home company that now can't find a modular home to put there for the specs. So the modulars they can get now are even higher than that; they're closer to \$1 million; and it looks like it's moving forward with a no-bid contract for nearly \$900,000 with a local contractor. That's tough to watch as far as consistency, and it's probably going to increase another \$200,000, maybe more than that by the end of the project. If the goal is to get a second sheet of ice, let's get a second sheet of ice. That doesn't mean the city has to be in the business of daycare; there's a lot of daycare providers.

The commissioners said this was all news to them, especially the trail work without the participation of RCR.

Approval of Minutes: August 9, August 23

Commissioner Watson moved to approve the August 9, 2017 meeting minutes; Sarah Floyd seconded the motion.
The motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Floyd moved to approve the August 23, 2017 meeting minutes; Commissioner Watson seconded the motion.
The motion carried unanimously.

Proposed Spring Creek Alternate Directional Bike Trail

STAFF PRESENTATION

Craig Robinson, Parks, Open Space and Trails Manager:
The fiscal impact has been revised; it could be in the \$250,000 plus range for the entire trail. Today the 2A Trails Committee met and they approved \$391,000 over two years to complete the project if it is endorsed and we decide to move forward. If not, they will reallocate those funds and spend them on other 2A projects as they rate all the projects they get to choose from.

Robinson reviewed the background of the 2A funds, the Trails Committee and the work done to date.

43 miles of trails will be developed on the Dry Lake area above Buff Pass. Robinson: When those decisions were made, we all knew that the Spring Creek Trail was the one trail connection between the city and this area. In the Trails Alliance proposal, the Spring Creek Alternative Trail was a proposed trail; that was to parallel the Spring Creek Trail in some fashion to get through Forest Service and city property down into the canyon. When Spring Creek Trail was constructed, it was a collaboration between county, city and Forest Service. It's a county road, then it's on city property, then on US Forest Service property.

The discussion today is focused on an alternate trail adjacent to the existing single-track trail. It would end at the two-track road on CR 34. At that point forward, it would share CR 34 with all recreationalists and motor vehicles that are on that road. There aren't many motor vehicles, but there are enough that there is a concern for safety. The people who use those areas have some concerns you'll hear about as well.

Once you get down to the ponds, the same situation exists. The city doesn't have a great alternative. There is a narrow single-track trail that was built from the gates and the ponds all the way down to Amethyst. We're in the process of working with the county to see if we can widen that trail to be a six-foot-wide soft-surface trail where possible. We're pinched because of the road and the creek, and we have wetland challenges, but we believe we can improve that area considerably with funding and time.

Fast bikes coming down the trail are a problem on the single-track trail. We do have accidents that are reported, with the most recent one being a week and a half ago. We don't get reports all the time about the incidents that occur, and I don't think they get reported to the sheriff's office or the city police either.

With the new trails that are being constructed, we are all anticipating an increase in downhill bike traffic coming down this trail. There were some other alternatives that were considered. The 2A proposal talked about it being up high on a ridge; IMBA looked at keeping it away from private property. At the end of the day, with all the challenges and restrictions and impacts to wildlife, the land managers and CPW felt we would better benefit from a stacked loop system that was kept close to the existing trail and creek that followed standards to minimize impacts to wetlands and the waterway; the trail would be created in a sustainable way. The vision is to utilize the existing bridges that are in place. It would be signed very clearly; the request would be not to have bikes going down the existing Spring Creek Trail. All traffic would go up the existing Spring Creek Trail, and bikes would come down their own separate trail.

Conflicts: Off-leash dogs, families, wildlife. There is a wildlife closure in this area; that would still apply to the new trail being proposed.

Alignment: Robinson showed the proposed trail alignment relative to the existing trail and area features.

Robinson: The road is considered a primitive road by the county; they do not maintain the lower portions at all; that's done by the landowners who live on that road. The county may come in and try to prevent the creek washing out the road somewhere were that to occur – or fix it after the fact.

It's very narrow. The space for a vehicle and another user to pass is challenging in many locations.

Through the canyon this is going to be a very challenging build; there's a lot of rock. This trail is not going to be as wide; it's not going to be built to the same standards; so it will be an easier build from that perspective, yet there are some challenges and there is some cost to this construction. We have a conceptual corridor we believe could work; it still needs to be refined.

Any trail projects have impacts to wildlife. The goal here is to minimize these impacts by keeping these trails close together.

The first time we met we talked about a two-phase project. Phase I is what I just described, and that's what we're talking about endorsing tonight. Phase II is a project to find an alternative trail from the point where the trail meets CR 34 out to either Amethyst or the ponds in order to separate the bike traffic in that area. We have been meeting with private property owners in that area, and at this point in time we do not have an agreement or alignment that works for all parties. We are not there, and I can't guarantee we will ever be there, but we are trying.

In the meantime, however this moves forward, Spring Creek Trail is open to all users today. If someone wanted to talk about closing it to specific users, i.e. bikes, there is a process where that would need to occur through the Forest Service and the city. We have tried some traffic-calming measures with some signage. We're in communication with Routt County Road and Bridge. We've met with the Routt County commissioners. We've talked to several homeowners who use the road or live in the area. Everybody has ideas.

Widening the road is going to be challenging at best; I don't think that's an option from the county's perspective. The area is not wide enough to create a separate trail along the road.

Traffic calming by perhaps delineating the road so user groups see a flag line perhaps down the center of the road might help. People don't tend to follow signage, but we can try. Encourage people to stay to their side of the road. I think they're surprised when they see a vehicle on this road. We've talked about having mandatory dismount sections where the trail meets the road, then hit them with the signage so they realize they've gone from whatever speeds they're travelling at downhill to a complete stop; getting off their bike; walking through a chicane; and seeing signage that lets them know that this is a multi-use trail with vehicles, moms, dogs, kids and everybody else.

We are continuing to work on easements or access through that canyon for bikes only. There's ongoing discussions about the Ditch Trail, which trespasses on private property and is raising concerns up there with homeowners as well.

Tonight we're looking for some sort of motion either to endorse the design, not endorse the design, or to table it for a future meeting.

COMMISSIONER DISCUSSION

Commissioner Koermer asked Robinson to show the proposed alternate routes from the Trails Alliance and IMBA.

Robinson did so.

Koermer confirmed that the proposal to be endorsed includes a stacked loop system.

Robinson: The discussion has been that it's a very popular biking and hiking area. It's a very easy bike ride to get to the end of the two-track. We still see riders that struggle with the climb; it's not technically difficult except for a couple of sections; and they can continue up the trail. It's about five miles from the gate to the top. We're proposing to utilize 4-6 bridges on city property and 1 bridge on Forest Service property. So if you're going up and you decide you've had enough, you can turn around and come down the biker-only trail. As you get further up, the same scenario is going to apply. Once you're done at the top, this will provide a separate, alternative trail all the way down.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Stephanie McNamara, owner, Spring Creek Cabin, 390099 CR 34:
The proposed bike trail as I understand it is an invitation to downhill racers to use the proposed new trail system with its improvements above the gate at the reservoir and to use the roadway from the gates to Amethyst in the canyon. I am concerned that there has been no impact study on the effect that this will have on the most travelled portion of Spring Creek Trail, which is in fact from Amethyst to the reservoir. Without some form of mitigation of the traffic on Spring Creek Trail, the vast majority of locals who enjoy walking their dogs and their children and families will be subjected to downhill bike racers whose main objective is to go from the top to the bottom as fast as possible. To my mind, that is an invitation to disaster not unlike the problem we all know so well of Patty Brenner. Her tragic death was the collision of a truck and a traveller with nowhere to go. The county road will become even more perilous when this new element is introduced into the canyon. The canyon is already packed with mixed use, but this new element will believe they have the right of way and the right to race in the canyon.

I have two suggestions that the landowners have discussed. They may well be presented by others today. Let me endorse these possible options.

- 1) Make the bike trail above contingent on the widening of the trail from Amethyst to the reservoirs so walkers and families have a place to walk comfortably. Make it at least six feet wide so groups can walk together comfortably. As the trail is now it is really used by groups who must walk single file. I would be willing to work with the county with easements to make this happen on my property.
- 2) Consider some significant switchbacks from the gates at the road to a point just above my property to slow down racer traffic and allow them to integrate with traffic on the road safely.
- 3) Strict enforcement with fines for excessive speed or recklessness. I urge the Parks and Rec Commission to carefully study the dangerous safety hazards that exist in an already difficult and narrow multi-use trail and to think and plan long and hard before approving this measure. Once done, it will be difficult if not impossible to change. Creating a race track in the canyon without mitigating the effects is a dangerous proposition.

Eric Meyer, 2775 Riverside Drive:

I think some of the people are viewing this wrong. We have had past collisions; they've been on the single track; there's been bike-on-bike collisions, maybe even bike-on-pedestrian collisions. I view it as totally irresponsible to not do this project. Yeah, there's challenges down below, but they're less than up on the single track where we've had a record that is unsafe.

When the Steamboat Springs Trails Alliance proposed all this, we had always hoped this was the first trail that went in; this was the one that needed to go in, in our opinion, before any of the upper improvements. The way approvals have happened that obviously didn't happen. It's not the end of the world; we haven't had a significant problem yet. From the counter data I've seen, the use up there has actually decreased this summer.

But this is going to be a safer situation by giving an outlet, because if they don't, they're coming down Spring Creek, which can be a very fast downhill trail.

I was looking to clarify the length of the trail and the status of the design. Is it just a general it's going to be on this side of the creek or not? Or is it just a wide general corridor that will have final design going forward? I do think this is an absolutely critical aspect of this whole project. If we have safety problems, it will cause problems on approvals of trails down the road, in my opinion.

Johnny Walker:

I'm co-author of the Spring Creek Management Plan in 1992. Since then I've become a property owner at the top as well. I am the truck that goes through there. Craig represented the views that a lot of us

landowners have. I'm a user with my truck but also with family coming and going.

All the property owners that I'm associated with, which is four of the five, we discuss this issue regularly. There's nobody not in support of it. Terry Huffington particularly is willing to work with us I think, particularly when it comes to the Ditch Trail. I think private property concerns can be mitigated; I think there's a good plan for that trail up to the ditch so we can make use of the ditch as a wonderful pedestrian trail that gets pedestrians away from bicycle traffic. At least half of that loop would be a really pleasant walk.

The problem we have with the whole system is a problem we've had since 1992. We have one in the city, which owns the pond area that was formerly a reservoir. That 40 acres has belonged to the city since 1910. In 1910 the Forest Service deeded to the city the 800 acre watershed area to provide water for those ponds. They weren't connected. That's the problem we're having right now is they're disconnected by one mile. That's that mile of county road we have between the two parts. It's always been a thorn in our side since the very beginning as to what we're going to do with this. Up till now it hasn't been a big issue, but the traffic from all users has increased. So now we have some unsafe impacts; we've reached a tipping point with the downhill traffic. An uphill biker becomes aware of the issues early into their trip before they come down. Now we have the downhill biker; many of them are shuttle driven; they don't ride those bikes up. Now they're going to be shuttled up to Buff Pass and ride the trail system, then come back down. I'm predicting that this trail system could be really great, but we have to address the weak link where it hits the county road. We're noticing it this summer especially on weekend evenings when we have the downhill biker finishing their day; not necessarily reading the signs; riding fast because that's what it's all about. If in Phase I we don't address the county issues, we're asking for trouble; a huge liability there. We've got all this traffic that we proposed to come in there, funneling right into a county road that's 7.5-foot wide; my truck is 6 feet wide; it brushes both sides in places as I go up there. On that one-mile section, a biker has to dismount for us to pass...

Koermer asked Walker to return after other comments have been taken as he had exceeded double the three-minute time limit.

David High, 2A Trails Committee:

This letter is on behalf of the committee members as a formal statement of support for the directional trails located on Spring Creek from the Dry Lake Trailhead to the bottom of the Spring Creek Trail:

The Spring Creek Trail represents one of the most popular trails for multiuse in Steamboat Springs. The recently added trails on US Forest

Service land have created a significant increase in trail use on Spring Creek, and more trails are planned for the near future. It has been the position of the 2A Committee that the creation of a directional trail be a priority given the anticipated increase in traffic on Buffalo Pass area.

Prior to the completion of the new trails we have seen multiple collisions between users, so the conflicts are not new. We feel that it's irresponsible for the county, city and US Forest Service to not address this issue immediately as there will be an increased potential for collisions and injuries.

The collaboration between private landowners and land managers has been ongoing, and we encourage the funding and the prioritization of this project to be supported by the Parks and Rec Commission and City Council.

Gretchen Shaler, 1383 Manitou Avenue:

I support this trail; I think it's a great thing. The issue we've been talking about is the county road. It's a road that's open to vehicle traffic for the people who live up there. Can you imagine walking down from Marabou four abreast pushing a baby stroller on an open county road? It's a county road. Yes, we need some signage and some things to slow bikers down, but I've been riding that trail for 35 years. I am wearing a helmet, but I'm not wearing garb and I respect others around me. I think that there needs to be something that changes the culture in a way. I like the idea on NPR where you turn people up the hill at the intersection of Larry's and all that so people slow down and it gets their attention that it's an intersection. There are things that can be done that can do that, and we need to create them. But it's still a county road that's open. So we need to educate not only the bikers but the walkers. Everybody needs to be educated and not blame put on one group. What about the dog walkers on leash and all that all the way up?

I support this; I hope you guys support it; I hope City Council supports it. It's a great gem that we have that's not Emerald, but everybody needs education; not just bikers.

David Scully, 1484 Morgan Court:

I stood in front of the Commission in support of this trail the last time this came up. I'm still in support of this trail. This is a safety valve. The directional trail will relieve a lot of the issues that we're talking about that revolve around the safety of all parties. So I encourage you to move forward on approving this trail as soon as possible.

Regarding the issues of concern down on the county road, I've heard a lot of good suggestions from the land managers; I'm sure you can work with the homeowners to come up with adequate measures that meet everybody's approval to slow riders down and educate them about the

conditions and the volume of traffic. The volume of traffic is going to increase, so the sooner solutions are found to address it, the safer everyone will be.

Craig Fritzen, 1147 Pine Street:

I'm in support of the directional trail. I think the biggest safety concern on Spring Creek is on the single track itself. The style of the trail allows for really high speeds. When the ferns get tall, it's hard to see around the corners. There's been multiple conflicts; I've had near misses there myself. I think we should get the directional trail going as soon as we can. I think if we're going to spend all this money on it, we should build something we're proud of. You should have berms and jumps; it should be a fun, directional downhill trail much like NPR. NPR has done a great job on Emerald of relieving a lot of the more popular trails of the faster and more aggressive downhill riders; this would have the same effect.

I agree it's less than ideal that these bikers are going to share the county road at this point, but I think we can come up with a solution. I think we should be building the trail on city property now, and let's try to figure out something in the county whenever we can. My experience riding that trail is that the conflicts are on the single track. I think I've probably seen one car on the county road out of 20+ years of riding up there. I don't feel that's as big a conflict. When you come off the trail and you're on the road, there's people walking their dogs; there's people everywhere. You see what's going on pretty quickly and you realize you can't be gunning it down this trail; it's just common sense.

It's my understanding that the tragic death that occurred was the result of a motor vehicle speeding. It definitely had nothing to do with a bicycle or anything like that.

But this sounds like a good idea. It sounds like we've got a lot of money; let's spend that money and build something we can be proud of.

Ryan Yates, 813 Pine Street:

I think this is a long overdue necessity; designed correctly, it will alleviate traffic, not create more. I'm sad that one of the prior commenters had such a negative comment about the downhill racers; I really don't think that's the case. But I can totally understand where that perception may come from. I'm a mountain biker, but I'm also a hiker and dog owner who doesn't use Spring Creek nearly as often as I'd like to because of its current situation. I think we need to look at this as almost a transportation logistic and we need to get it done and done correctly.

Kyle Pietras, 366 Pearl Street:

I'm for the downhill trail as well. I agree with all the prior points positive toward the trail. I've been in a collision going up Spring Creek on my bike, and I think this will alleviate that possibility a lot.

Matt Hightower, Strawberry Park Cabins:

I've competed in mountain bike endure races all over the place. I'll tell you the one place I do not like going fast is a gravel road. I slow down; it's dangerous. I think that's going to be one of our least concerns for safety. The concern for safety is the single track. That trail is packed every weekend with multiple users going up Spring Creek. Now we have this beautiful trail system we've built up there; people are going to want to connect to that, and they're going to use this trail. We need to separate people on that single track. We know that people have gotten hit on it. I've hit a dog myself because it was off leash and I couldn't see through the ferns.

User groups need to be separated for safety. If we make this connector it's only going to complement Buff Pass; it may even bump us up in IMBA status to get more bikers and their money here.

Aryeh Copa, 2570 Cortina Lane, RCR Trail Builders Division:

I've been very involved in this whole process and laying stuff out. As Craig had mentioned, we originally had planned that trail on top of the ridgeline through a bunch of rocks; it would have been really fun and kind of rowdy. After numerous meetings with landowners, pretty shortly after this went through the vote we had changed our whole route to right down next to the creek the whole way. I heard a couple things tonight that I was unaware of that I really need to clarify because I think it's important to the overall success of this project. Since this trail utilizes the existing bridges, bikers will be sharing the trail with all the other users on those bridges. When we looked at this, our whole idea was get off the trail completely. We did a lot of vetting up there over a couple years. Personally, I believe that trail should remain on the entire west side of Spring Creek the entire way. It would be immensely less expensive. If you're using existing bridges you wouldn't have to build more bridges, however, we've looked at it and it would require some significant rock work. But to me, getting those users completely separated and then making connector points from the bridges is what creates your stacked loop system. So there's a lot of different locations where the bridges cross, and we would try to bring the trail real close to that. I was totally unaware that any design work had been done up there beyond what we laid out on the Forest Service property until today.

I think the entire length west-side option really needs to be looked at; I don't think there's any reason to share the trail with the users; that's really a breakup of space. If you're stopping and having to break your downhill run to then get on a bridge with other users on it and then go

down, you're no longer on a user-specific trail; you're on a whole bunch of different trails that have to cross bridges and join other trails. I believe that what's really going to satisfy the riders and the people that are riding those upper trails is a directional bikes-only trail top to bottom. Trails go by really fast when you're riding downhill, and to cross that creek numerous times is really going to be a breakup of that trail and I think immensely diminish the quality of it. I've definitely looked at the alignment, and it's completely buildable to the west and totally separates the users. You can have a stacked loop system with as many connections as you want from the existing Spring Creek to the alternate. I'm not sure how the alignment came up to use the existing bridges, but personally I think that's a big mistake. I'm willing to build whatever is presented to me, but I believe there's a lot better alignment than using existing sections of Spring Creek.

Tom Scrimgeour, 2623 Burgess Creek Road:

I'm a mountain biker, hiker, dog owner. As a mountain biker I can tell you it's hard to go slow on this trail coming down. As a hiker, I know what mountain bikers are thinking and what they're trying to not do, but it's scary going uphill around blind corners when I know bikers are coming down – especially as a dog owner if your dog is wandering a little bit. But I can't imagine not doing this trail. It seems like anybody I know has been talking about this from the beginning. It just seems so obvious.

To address the idea of a chicane coming out onto the county road: I think something like that would be totally appropriate to change the mindset for riders coming down. It sounds like though if we're crossing bridges five times we're already having to change out mindset to merge with the existing trail. I'm totally in favor of that kind of measure at the end of the trail when it comes onto the county road to slow people down.

I'm in favor; please do it.

Keith agreed with Copa's concerns about the trail alignment.

Chris Arness said there was a prior vision for a trail on the west of the creek.

Walker: There was about a mile of trail above the county road that was on private property that was pulled. That's why going up CR 34 there's a funny little switchback that you climb and it's kind of eroded there. That was all put in when the previous trail was torn out, including two bridges that crossed private property.

Up to Bridge 5, there's a high degree of pedestrian traffic because it's the end of the "Ditch Loop." They come in off the ditch at Bridge 5, and there's a lot of traffic there. Above that, there's less pedestrians.

That gate is not officially locked; it's open to the public. Local landowners have the combination.

Where is the liability going to fall when there is an accident? That's why I stop and let bikers go by me. I've hit bikers; every time, I was stopped and the biker came into me. What's a good lawyer going to do with that? Give some discussion to how we're going to deal with that and that one-mile section of county road. We've got to get the county onboard.

Kim Vogel, 230 5th Street, Lightning Ridge Ranch:
Keeping the use separate I think is the best idea for safety. But I also think that bringing this decision here today is a little bit premature. I feel like we've been piecemealing this along; we've got the Forest Service decision that has happened; we've got this one being brought here today for a decision; and then we've got the lower portion that will come later. I feel like without having all those pieces at once to bring to a decision that you're kind of forcing future decisions. There are other options for trailheads other than Spring Creek to bring all this traffic down from the National Forest; I think those ought to be looked at. I think without a good management plan for managing and enforcing a lot of the rules and regulations that need to happen for safety, you're putting these trails in place and then a lot of times what happens is there's no money to enforce those. So unless you are really thinking about that management plan ahead of time, you've been premature in putting that out there and there's a lot of people who won't trust that it happens.

Meyer: I don't think this should be a final approval; I think this should be an approval to bring back a final design, especially on the upper piece. There could be phased things for the lower stuff, too. I think the property owners sound like they're real close to all together; you've got four out of five. There's different options to go down there. Like Kim said, there's absolutely an option that goes down more into Strawberry Valley, but they all involve private property owners. This is the only one that has top-to-bottom public land and county easements that I can find. It is private property owners that could really change this system to world class. Right now we are at a do the best we can up top with some continuing problems down lower. I understand that, but there will be people that don't expect a car up there. The suggestion at the 2A meeting of a really big sign that shows a car and a bike crushed in the front of a car is probably going to have a lot more impact than a regular sign.

Get the county involved. They keep refusing to be involved with anything recreation. That's a serious problem. I encourage every person in this room to send something to their county commissioners

saying get involved, county, this is a problem; come be a part of the solution.

Hightower: I used to be a 911 dispatcher here in town; I'm not aware of any county roads where bicycles are not allowed.

Patrick West, 108 Hillside Drive:

I'm in favor of the dual trails on Spring Creek. I ride Spring Creek all the time; it's my primary access to the Buffalo trail network. As word gets out and the popularity of the Dry Lake Campground trails increases, we're going to get increased traffic on Spring Creek no matter what. The trails that are up there are going to start drawing more people, and the new stuff that they build is going to provide more and more demand on this trail.

I hear the concerns of the homeowners on the lower part, but that's really a county problem. What Eric just said is completely right: The city needs to start putting pressure upon the county and the county commissioners to get in the recreational game because we are a recreational town. Denying that their assets are being used for recreation is not helping the situation, and it's going to lead to another tragic event. I think the sign Eric was talking about would be more appropriate than the ones up there now. I know everybody has done a lot of great work up there; Rocky Mountain Youth Corps has done a lot of work with the water and the drainage before we get to the parks thing. But I'd like you guys to focus on the fact that the main problem everyone is having with this is a county problem, and tonight we're here to discuss your approval of improvements to the city part that's at the end of the county road. I hope you guys approve this plan and move forward – and maybe put a note to the county in there to help bring them around to the table because they're going to be an important part of this as we move forward.

COMMISSIONER DISCUSSION

Commissioner Floyd:

Having been on Spring Creek for 30 years myself, obviously there's been a lot of changes up there. I'm more of a hiker, so I'm encountering bikers on a regular basis both on Emerald and Spring Creek. I recognize the problem. We go to Spring Creek maybe 1 out of every 20 times because it's just not pleasant. I agree fully we need to do something, and I agree with Johnny that this has gotten to an accident waiting to happen. Personally, I think it was unfortunate to build all those trails without a good plan. I think that it should have been that this plan was the first trail and then the upper trails were done – because we've created our own problem and the urgency to do something. I'd love to know the difference in cost between using the bridges and having a straight, downhill course. I could support

something like that with a chicane at the bottom where people really need to stop before they get to the county road. I still have concerns about the county road, and I think that's where the most heavy traffic is and all. But right now we have concerns about the whole thing. So maybe in light of this we can come up with a plan. I'm with Aryeh that sharing the bridges is not a solution; I don't think it gives the bikers what they're looking for in the experience of a downhill trail, and I don't think it puts the other users in a safe situation when there's a bridge every section. So what's the cost in building a trail that doesn't utilize those bridges for multiuse with a stop at the bottom?

Commissioner Watson:

Not just the cost but the whole reason why. Is it because of wildlife concerns that this is so close?

Robinson: We walked the trail and looked at what we believe is the constructability of a trail in that canyon. We are open to the discussion; there's a lot of planning dollars out there. If it can be kept on one side, that's less impact, and if it's feasible, we can let that happen. We can work together with the land managers to approve a final alignment. What we saw was in several areas there's a lot of rock and a lot of situations that may preclude safe construction for trail users in those areas. We're going to be following environmental concerns that the Forest Service and the city has in place; we're going to be using IMBA standards. We don't really know what the final alignment is going to look like; we are open to having less bridges. It will cost if we have to construct separate bridges, but 2A has that funding available, so if there's a desire to keep it totally separate, we can. One of the things we need to consider is that we have all types of mountain bike users up there – beginners, intermediates, experts – and we need to get them all down. If it's a top-to-bottom only, you can still have an access off of the existing trail to go to that trail that takes you downhill. If someone bails halfway up because they're tired, we don't want that biker going fast down that trail; they need to get off that trail and onto this downhill trail. So we need to have that connectivity. So there could be less bridges; it would add a little bit of cost if we had to add bridges that were separate. If we can keep it all on one side, we will. I think the challenges of the environment are going to prohibit that in some areas. Final alignment will be decided between city, Forest Service and CPW.

Floyd: I think what you were asking us tonight was to approve this or approve bringing this to Council without...

Robinson: It's not going to go to Council. This is a public process for an endorsement of a conceptual alignment from the top of Spring Creek at the Dry Lake Parking Lot area all the way down to the two-track CR 34 paralleling the existing trail. Typically, Parks and Rec Commission doesn't weigh in on design other than if it's going to be a type of trail.

As a couple people mentioned, we'd love to have berms and jumps and everything; it's very expensive to maintain. We didn't talk about maintenance today. The city has a challenge maintaining trails currently; this is adding more. A flow trail when built properly can have less of a cost dollar. We're looking to build natural features that don't require a lot of maintenance and have a low-cost, sustainable trail that's constructed for riders of all levels to get down safely and perhaps with alternate lines where more advanced riders could have some extra credit lines. Until we see that final alignment, we won't know what that is.

This endorsement is for city staff to move forward with a trail plan. 2A Trails Committee has already approved some dollars; we have design dollars out there. We would roll into design this fall and if approved, construct as early as next year. If it is not endorsed tonight, we will wait for whatever direction is given.

Watson: If we were to approve the concept with the stipulation that certain user groups had to be involved in the design process, could that be...

Robinson: RCR has a special use agreement with the Forest Service and will be building the trail.

Watson: It appears to me just from listening tonight that not all user groups were aware of some of these designs. Where I'm sitting it's a little concerning to hear Aryeh didn't know about some of the changes that were made. That concerns me if they're going to be the ones building it.

Robinson: We looked at a conceptual corridor, which is a very common trail-building technique. We're not saying it's definite; there is some flexibility built into the system. If there's a way to get down a certain side that we didn't think there was, great! Show us; we'll do the assessments that are needed from an environmental perspective to make sure it's possible; if it's possible and constructible, we can let that occur.

John Overstreet:

One thing to clarify: I believe that the 2A Trails funding recommendation is for the coming year. They do have to go before Council for approval.

Koermer: This needs to happen from my perspective. It's going to get used; Spring Creek is going to have much more volume with the new trails that exist on Buff Pass; an egress is 100% necessary. The concept itself has my endorsement; I just don't know if I believe that it should be comingled with the bridges of the existing trail. I think there

are other options, and we need to see those options. I endorse the concept; I don't know if I endorse the design because it really hasn't been presented to me. I want to get an idea of whether separating the alternate from the existing trail is going to have high impact on wildlife.

Chris Middledorf, Colorado Parks and Wildlife:

In Routt County we're looking at a lot of trails – not just for bikes but for everybody. Putting trails closer to each other can reduce the amount of fragmentation. There's some pretty good habitat in that area as well. For the final alignment, I think the closer the better. I'd be happy to sit down with the city and talk about it.

While I'm up here, I just want to ask the city to look closely at conditional use policies in the future. Law enforcement is incredibly difficult. We have the city's portion here; we have the county's road; we have the Forest Service. The Forest Service has one law enforcement officer for two forest districts; I have one officer in the Steamboat area, and that person doesn't have enforcement capability on trails. Looking at the future, we're going to have a lot of people up there, and maintaining that closure is going to be very important. Without law enforcement, who do we rely on? That's our users; responsible users, social pressure, but also potentially a conditional use policy where we know what the existing baseline conditions are; we know what that trail alignment is; but if in future we find illegal trails or uses that go beyond that existing baseline or in that closure, the city or Forest Service has the ability to close that until we get back to that baseline condition. I think law enforcement is going to be almost impractical on many of our trails, so we're looking to the users to help us with that.

Kent Foster, US Forest Service:

We've always taken a look at this holistic approach of the Spring Creek Trail being a very important component to the whole Buffalo Pass trail system. Last summer when we started building trails, we consciously did start with the trails up on Buffalo Pass thinking that we'd be able to do the Spring Creek Alternate Trail. When we went out for public comment in our analysis, CR 34 wasn't even an issue. It didn't even come up. It wasn't until Johnny actually contacted us saying, I'm seeing so much use up here; we need to do this. So that's when we started with the dialog with Johnny, Craig. Craig has been working diligently trying to figure out different options to do this; I'm trying to help out as much as I can on this side of things while we're still doing things up on Buffalo Pass. I agree we need to get a trail to get people down.

We see user conflicts all the time. Our trail counts in July showed that on the Flash of Gold Trail, hikers and dog walkers equaled mountain bikers. To me, that shows that there's a lot of interested in trails and we have a lot of use for trails.

So to answer how these trails should look, it's not all about mountain biking. Just talking to people one-on-one, these systems need to be a little bit more diverse; we need to provide something for everybody. A lot of people recreate up there; Dry Lake is ten minutes out of town; it's the closest spot other than Rabbit Ears, and we're going to be looking at other opportunities up there. Luckily, we've got the money through this partnership with the city to do this, otherwise it's been just a lot of talk.

Watson: So if we were to move to endorse this, it does say endorse the design and construction. But it's not the design that was presented; it's a design, not the design. I know I'm mincing words, but I'm trying to provide clarity for us up here.

Robinson: It would be IMBA specifications, Forest Service guidelines, sustainable, low-maintenance design.

MOTION

Commissioner Watson moved to endorse the design and construction of the 2A funded proposed Spring Creek Alternate Trail.

Commissioner Keith seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

Floyd said she struggled with the bridges; Koermer reminded that this endorsement is not for the final design but the conceptual corridor.

Walker pointed out that this trail would further congest that one mile of CR 34 with which himself and other local landowners have expressed concern. He warned that promoting more bike traffic on this section of county road could increase the chance of accidents.

Commissioners said that this alternate trail would mitigate conflict on 80% of the Spring Creek Trail, which would be a significant improvement over the current situation.

Vogel urged the Commission to look at other options; she encouraged the Commission to look at another trailhead that would provide users with another option for coming down from the trails on Buffalo Pass.

Koermer said this endorsement is to get parties working toward the end result of a Spring Creek Alternate bike trail.

Floyd pointed out that if a trail were to be further away from the Spring Creek Trail, it would be more of a challenge to implement the stacked loop concept. That would make Spring Creek Trail an uphill only trail all the way to the top; riders would not be allowed to turn around.

Meyer: As Steamboat Springs Trails Alliance, we actually did talk to property owners up on top. Our first proposal was on top of the ridge. We sat down with John Petty at the top and asked if a trail could cut across his property. He gave his permission as long as he couldn't see helmets from his deck. As we looked at that a little bit closer, it's an expensive build up there, and it's probably not going to serve the purpose because you're going to have to make someone from Dry Lake climb a little bit before they go down. We said in the big picture, by pushing that alternate up on the ridge, it's probably not going to take the pressure off Spring Creek. There's absolutely some other options. Meyer showed possible options, all of which involved private property. Meyer: We didn't have the time as a volunteer group to approach the five property owners near the canyon and the ones further over towards Strawberry Park, but there's absolutely opportunities for egress that way; it's just a much more complicated process. The private property owners can change this if they're at the table, and the county can definitely change this. Meyer agreed with the Commission that fixing 80% of the problem is preferable to fixing none of it.

Proposed Emerald Mountain Trail Improvements

Craig Robinson:

We brought this concept through the Commission in 2014. At that point we were talking about newly approved funds from the 2A committee and the possibility of developing downhill directional trails on Emerald. What we have today is NPR (No Peddling Required.) Phase I was Upper NPR, Lower NPR, which was a side-by-side green and blue trail, and it ends probably three quarters of the way down to the base of the ski area. The last section, what we call Howelsen Hill Directional #2, was not constructed. There was a little revision from the 2A proposal's original plan on what these trails would look like. The 2A Committee has funded several of these projects.

The area that RCR had proposed warranted some discussion. It's right below the homes to looker's right of Mile Run at the ski area. It is outside of the historic boundaries of the ski area. We did go through the Historic Preservation Commission, and they did not vote on this section because it is not part of their purview within the boundary. However, they were concerned about the visual character and the impacts it would have to Howelsen. The area below the homes is very steep. Northwest Colorado Consultants was hired by 2A to look at the existing conditions and constructability in that area. They found slopes of 30-90% steepness, and there were some challenges in that area.

The vision was to build an uphill-downhill trail for multiuse year-round. There would be two downhill trails constructed (blue and green) to continue the existing NPR trails.

Based on NWCC's work and the 2A Committee, they approved funding for Civil Design Consultants to engineer a plan to construct trails in that area. The soils report from NWCC recommended cuts of 1-12 feet to cut a bench that was suitable for the safe recreation access required in some of these steep areas. Not everybody agreed with those studies, in particular RCR.

At first the trail was looked at as a 4% climb, which is comparable to Orton or many of the trails on Emerald. It added length and switchbacks to the trail. After some discussion, we had CDC look at a different design and brought it back to the steepness which was recommended by RCR of 8-10%. They came back with a construction estimate of \$458,000. Based on that information, the 2A Committee chose not to fund that alternative.

There were some questions about whether that construction estimate was realistic or whether it could have been done cheaper. At that point it was brought to Native Excavating, which is a contractor experienced with heavy equipment. They're not trail construction, but they do the type of work that CDC recommended for this type of trail construction. City staff continued to look at how we would get down that area. We have an existing trail that goes up today; Lower Mile Run, also known as Robby's Cut. We thought that to achieve the goals of the 2A proposal we would be able to improve the uphill experience to make it easier for multiuse to get up that trail. Make it safer for the green downhill NPR folks to come down that trail on that shared-use trail, and then separate the downhill blue riders with their own trail in this area where NWCC had done their soils investigation. By separating that blue downhill traffic, we're seeing benefits and less conflict on existing trails as others like to go up and other recreationists are out there using those trails. The downhillers are choosing to go down the downhill directional trails.

This proposal we've started looking at achieves that goal, we believe. We presented this option to the 2A Committee. They decided that they would support funding for Yay and Associates who is now doing our soil study for the greater Howelsen Hill, and looked at Robby's Cut. They thought it would be a suitable area to construct a trail; we're still waiting on the final written report. But their report will be saying that a trail is constructible in this area to make the uphill access easier.

We put together some estimates. RCR believes our estimates may be off and that we're not comparing apples to apples, and that there probably needs to be some more discussion before you make a motion unless you see this as a viable project. We're probably going to be back out in the field trying to figure out an alignment that works for

everybody. At the end of the day, 2A dollars needs to support what's approved and the vision and fund the trail project.

Today, the 2A Trails Committee ranked this lower than the Spring Creek Trail project. If there's additional funds, they can reprioritize money next year and perhaps move this higher on their list of projects. We won't know until that time.

Robinson showed the map of the proposed trail as well as the existing, steeper trails and showed how the proposed trail would reduce conflict and make the uphill climb easier.

This does not address uphill winter traffic.

Robinson: We are recommending an uphill access trail through the base area and up Mile Run, and then we want you off the ski area and on Blackmere as soon as possible. There's also other options on the other side of Howelsen where snowshoers beat down their own terrain that is not on groomed Nordic trails, which is the fee system that we have over there.

Some of the discussion in the past was around the impacts to Fairview and what should be done in that neighborhood. It's been said in public meetings that the Fairview Nation would prefer not to have a parking lot up there; would prefer not to have public access points up there. Yet, there are public roads that service the thousands of acres that are owned by the public and this trail system on Emerald. That is an access to that location today. There are trails that go all the way down to 13th Street kind of across from B&K that could be improved to improve access to the trail system and Blackmere Drive from that side. That trail could be used year-round.

We believe we have an uphill access trail in this scenario; there's access to the other side of Howelsen. If the direction is that we go back out and spend more time in the field talking about it, we did agree to meet with RCR Trail Builders to have them look at this alignment. At the time, we thought we were moving forward. Since then, we have heard that there are concerns by others.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Gretchen Shaler, 1383 Manitou Avenue, Fairview
Didn't we just take access out of a neighborhood, Pamela Lane, and take it around a different road. Are we going to take traffic out of the circle on Blackmere Drive? In all the years I've lived there, there's been no enforcement on the circle. In the wintertime you can't drive around it. I have counted 35 cars parking there. People open their doors and their dogs are out. I would not do that to a neighborhood. You need to create an access in the wintertime that is free, easily accessible, with parking, that doesn't force people to go through a neighborhood. A

parking lot up in that circle will impact others more than me; I'm lucky enough to live on the other side. The circle on my side gets blocked and you cannot drive around; you can't get emergency vehicles through there. We have seen no one getting tickets in that area.

I love the idea of continuing trails on down, but we must think about how it impacts a neighborhood.

Eric Meyer:

I'm not with RCR but definitely involved in the process for a while. I actually regret the way this got proposed. There is an improvement to Blackmere Drive in the Steamboat Trails Alliance. We were too far along in the process to pull that out, but in hindsight, knowing the Pamela Lane stuff and hearing the comments from Fairview, I wish we hadn't allowed that to continue. For most of those types of projects, the history was Bike Town tried to get the city to do a grant with the state to cover some really big infrastructure; City Council decided not to move forward with that. We used that template to start with some of the in-town improvements.

I think there needs to be a western access, but I also think this is a place where you have trails above, so we're talking about building top down. In this case, we actually have no private property owners all the way down, so we should be able to solve this. My biggest concern about this proposal is that it's a drastically different trail than NPR on the top. The top section is approximately 6.3% grade; the stuff that got built the next year, the easier route is about 7.6, the intermediate line 8.5. With the current 1500-ish feet of estimated downhill trail there, you're looking at 13+% grade average. So you're talking about doubling the steepness of the upper one. I think you're going to need more maintenance the steeper you go; you're going to have to bring in a lot of dirt. I question the comparison of the CDC estimates when you're talking about an \$800,000+ dollar estimate that we got down to \$458,000. You can't compare that to the numbers discussed at the 2A Committee meeting today of \$12,000 and \$30,000. I'm a civil engineer. You cannot take a bid out to a civil engineer like CDC and talk to Native, who is used to building roads, and compare it to an estimate of a trail.

If you look at the history of a multiuse trail built recently in Emerald, and you compare it to the directional trails which need extra width, features, and other requirements: NPR cost between \$11.30 to upwards of \$26 per linear foot. When you look at the cost per foot on a multiuse trail – our most expensive being Morning Gloria at \$8.40 a foot and 2-\$3 per foot for Flash of Gold; you've got to compare apples to apples.

I don't think you stop the project; it needs more design money and planning. You need to look at both in an apples-to-apples case. I hope you don't ask CDC to design more roads up there because I don't think it would pass the Historic Commission or the public. But I think you can get a narrow intermediate single-track that isn't high maintenance that is really cheap. You're going to look at I'm guessing half the cost of this proposal to do it the other way. You have the width needed on Robby's Cut. You're talking about doing the same thing above the BMX track where you have a couple steep areas. If you go do Robby's Cut right now, you've got the perfect width for a downhill trail, and you have a couple steep areas to give you an accelerator into a feature. Drop a couple jumps on there, throw up a wood berm, and solve the last little piece on the bottom which needs more design work, and you're done with that. Cutting a whole new trail on a steep slope that could slide is a recipe for disaster.

With no more design money and looking at both of them apples to apples with the same designer and looking at real costs, I wouldn't move forward with it. The winter access and the Blackmere Drive stuff is definitely a problem.

Copa: From a trail builder's perspective I just want to point out some of the differences in trails here. I was asked to walk and look at this new route. At first I was a little skeptical of a downhill route over here having hiked up there and looked at the possibility of a multiuse trail. After I actually walked up there and looked at it, I came to the conclusion this could be a super-fun downhill trail. It's got a really different kind of terrain than the rest of Emerald; it's really shaly and has some pinion and lodge pole on there that provide a totally different kind of trail surface that drains really well. However, you're not really going to be able to mimic NPR on that; it would be a very different type of downhill trail – more of a loose, technical style. So I wasn't really looking at it as a continuation of NPR but just another alternate route. This trail would remain the egress for the beginners, which would make a lot of sense if you were going to do that. I personally have no problem with a downhill trail over here. I think there's a couple disadvantages and a couple advantages.

From a trail builder's standpoint, in terms of expense, when you get on a really steep, shaly hillside like that, the wider the trail is, the more it's going to cost per foot. You're either going to require a retaining wall or a deep bench cut. There's a lot of decomposing shale on that as well as existing shale cliffs that are still attached to the bedrock. So it's quite a bit of work to try to put some sort of wide flow trail in there. Trying to mimic NPR down there is going to cost a lot of money. However, putting in a narrower single track shouldn't cost much at all – either as a multiuse climbing route or as a downhill route. You could probably make it cheaper as a downhill route if you weren't adding

features because with a downhill route you can exceed certain grades that you're trying to achieve on the climbing route.

The existing Robby's Cut is currently very wide, and you could pretty easily mimic an NPR-style trail. It definitely has steeper pitches, so it's going to be higher speed. However, it is already there, and I believe you could make the downhill trail much less expensive if you're trying to mimic NPR over here than you would ever get it over there. So from an overall cost if you were trying to mimic an NPR kind of feel all the way down the mountain, I think it would be much less expensive to turn Robby's Cut into NPR and make the other a multiuse.

For the little strip at the bottom, you could come back to an NPR-style trail down there and put probably a five or six-pack of jumps in that line, which would be super fun and something we're missing now that the mountain got rid of their five-pack. I would love to see a jump line between those two roads. But you're not going to get that style of trail all the way up.

I don't really have a strong opinion one way or the other as to which way it should go; it's more what are you looking for. If you want NPR continuing all the way to the bottom, then Robby's Cut is probably the more reasonable and much less expensive route. If you're okay with having a different downhill only bike trail over here, then this would be fine and doing those reroutes would be somewhat reasonable to make that more climbable. I do think in the long run it would be a lot less expensive to turn Robby's Cut into a downhill trail and make a multiuse climbing route over there.

Hal Ferguson, 1111 Pleasantville Lane:

I'm the closest to ground zero. We just need to mitigate the traffic impact we're having over there. There's more children in Fairview today than there are parents, and the speeds people are going. It's the Pamela Lane thing all over again. Those cars switch every two hours because that's the approximate time people go out there. I have nothing against anybody using the facilities. I leave the trails entirely up to the trail builders. This is an economic engine we've got at Emerald, and we need to supply access from town so people can come up that side and lessen the impact on our side.

Chris Arness, 1051 Manitou Avenue:

I think there are several possibilities for parking up there, but I don't think they've addressed all the possibilities for access.

Craig Fritzen:

Supports continuing a downhill trail to the bottom of Howelsen. My whole family loves NPR and riding up on Emerald; we would love to see some more stuff like that continue to the bottom.

Bridget Ferguson, 1111 Pleasantville Lane:

We're right next to the Emerald Trailhead. I like NPR; I think it's taken a lot of the really fast bikers off the trails. The only issue I have with NPR is in the winter when they groom the trails beautiful and then the snowmobile comes up and does numerous loops kind of negating all this beautiful corduroy. I'm a skier, so that's important to me. So I think you should maybe address that.

Also, the parking issue is crazy up there. People have been putting up cones just to try to slow the traffic down. I just don't want to see any parking lot up there because it's another Pamela Lane, and let's not have to go there.

COMMISSIONER DISCUSSION

Koermer: We have to pinpoint what we're actually trying to achieve. I'd be willing to table this and split it into two discussion points: access and continuation of NPR/creation of a new downhill trail through the shale area.

Floyd: Is there concern about having a downhill trail through the base area? Are people coming through the jump area at speed?

Robinson: Through signage we would try to address the safety impacts as always. This is someone separated from existing trails, so we shouldn't have people in those areas. Again, we're relying on signage to help promote that safety, not people hiking up these trails.

Floyd: Would there be any hiking up that side of the mountain any longer?

Robinson: Yes. The goal is for all parties to have the best uphill access possible. That trail would be outside of the ski area, so people could hike up there year round if it was packed down by users.

Floyd: Could they have dogs?

Robinson: On leash, maybe, but they'd be going through the ski area boundary on the bottom, so we'd have to think about that one.

Floyd: There are multiple great routes to get up from the parking lots at Howelsen and downtown, but the fact that there's no dogs on ski area property is a challenge.

Robinson: The reason why CDC's cost was so expensive is because of the parameters we put on the construction of an uphill trail. We don't want this to fail; we don't want this to be a maintenance problem. Because of the past instability challenges of Howelsen, we wanted this

trail constructed properly the first time so it would last. So if this trail is going to be used in the wintertime, if it's a single track with a drop-off on the side, that's not safe from our perspective. The parameters we gave CDC to design on I think are different than what Eric has been talking about for the width and the safety protocols that we'd be following. So if the trail were being utilized in the wintertime, it would be perhaps more challenging with three feet of snow on it than what we were proposing for year-round access. It was going to be an eyesore, no doubt about it, with a big cut. It was going to be a very visible trail that went up the side of the mountain.

Floyd: A couple years ago when we proposed some use of that land, we were not allowed to use it because of the hot spring area and the surrounding area. Is this cognizant of that?

Robinson: It is. The same challenges exist, so with the downhill NPR continuing on what is red and green on that map, we would need to see how it impacts those areas. But it is likely going to be designated on the National Register of Historic Places, and there's certain commitments that a community makes if we're going to do this to not natively impact that. That would need to be taken into account as we went through that process.

Floyd: My thought would just be before you get too far with any of it, determine what that space is. It seemed to be not something that was negotiable at that time.

Robinson: This proposal does not impact it.

Floyd: How much more money is in 2A? Is there a plan where all the trails are built out and there will be no more trails, or will there always be new trails?

Meyer: That's up to the public. I would say that we definitely missed trails that the public wants badly in that plan. There's connections off of Fish Creek back over to the ski area; we should have had that in. There wasn't a huge number of people making that plan happen. We reached out as much as we could; we probably got 100+ comments. We held meetings all the time and had a lot of people there, but when it came down to it, most people gave us a little input and went on. There were online forums, which is where we probably got 10 comments overall. The most on a trail was probably NPR, and that was probably like 15. 2A has a lot of money still. It's now up into the \$600,000 a year thing. I talked to Ginger today and said please find a way for us to help improve Bear River Park. We have a project out there for some perimeter trail type stuff with an end of Core Trail type of feel that loops you back around and keeps you going. We could use that as matching money and go into GOCO grants and fix that place

up. Expand the skate park; get a shade structure up there. The dirt trails are not costing anywhere near what our estimates were. We were estimating \$8 a foot for certain trails like NPR. Some of them did exceed that. I don't think they had to, but... Our estimate was \$5.35 -- \$5 plus rate of inflation. They're proving that with the equipment we have, you're seeing 3 and \$4 trails being built. There's going to be extra money, in my opinion. I don't know the design costs in Forest Service and planning; there's some big dollars in there, whereas city staff is tasked with doing this all on their existing budget. Forest Service was not going to. City staff asked for one, and 2A said no. There's a lot of money left there. They don't get to talk details at that; they talk big picture; they don't get into the details.

MOTION

Commissioner Koermer moved to not endorse the improvement of an existing trail for multiple recreation use and complete construction on this design but to go back to the drawing board and come up with a different option. Ask staff to talk about access on an upcoming agenda along with the concept of completing a downhill trail to the base of the park.

Commissioner Floyd seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Floyd: I think it's critical that we talk about what access can come up through Howelsen Park because we have parking lots there. The hard part is it's really steep, but beyond that point we've got that area down there. We're prohibiting people from using it because of dogs and access and winter and so forth. That's something I think should be considered to try to encourage people to get down to the park where we already have what we need that's not in these peoples' yard.

Koermer: As we go through this Howelsen Hill Master Plan, this needs to be at the forefront of what we discuss. We've heard loud and clear for several years that there's a concern with access to Blackmere and the abundance of trails that we have between the Emerald easement and Howelsen Hill.

Floyd pointed out that the city has continued to enhance the opportunities for hiking and biking at Buffalo Pass and Emerald Mountain without any plan to get people there and back, which created a sense of urgency that shouldn't be there. She hoped a more holistic approach would be used for future areas.

Commissioner Koermer rescinded the motion.

MOTION

Commissioner Koermer moved to table this topic to a future meeting to more carefully consider the end goal of these items.
Commissioner Floyd seconded the motion.
The motion carried unanimously.

Next Meeting: September 27

Discuss master plan update.

Adjournment

Commissioner Floyd moved to adjourn the meeting at approximately 8:09 p.m.
Commissioner Keith seconded the motion.
The motion carried unanimously.