

## RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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*Town of Estes Park, Larimer County, Colorado, November 20, 2008*

Minutes of a Special meeting of the **PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE** of the Town of Estes Park, Larimer County, Colorado. Meeting held at Town Hall in said Town of Estes Park on the 20<sup>th</sup> day of November 2008.

Committee: Chairman Blackhurst, Trustees Levine and Miller  
Attending: All  
Also Attending: Town Administrator Halburnt, Deputy Town Administrator Richardson, Director Zurn, Town Clerk Williamson  
Absent: None

Chairman Blackhurst called the meeting to order at 8:55 a.m.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT.**

None.

### **ACTION ITEMS.**

#### **CVB Arboretum Expansion and South Parking Lot Landscape Master Plan-Request Approval.**

The Tree Board has requested funding to expand the arboretum from the current CVB location across the river and to the areas around the south parking area of the CVB and the river. The expansion of the arboretum would add value to the community both as area restoration, but also an expansion of the educational opportunities it would bring to visitors and citizens. The Tree Board believes the area should be planned by a professional landscape architect. The resulting plan could be implemented over time with money budgeted each year from the Tree City designation. It is estimated several years of funding would create a much more inviting area and establish a natural riverbank environment behind and around the CVB. Cost estimates for a detailed landscape design is \$15,000. This item was not budgeted for 2008; however, could be funded with a partnership between the Town and EPURA or Park staff could develop a landscape plan.

Tree Board members Scott Roederer and Sandy Burns presented the concept to the Committee. The arboretum would be planted with native plants and labeled. The area contains many issues most notably the erosion of the riverbank and the slumping of the sidewalk, and therefore, the Tree Board requests the assistance of a professional. The entire south bank of the river across for the CVB has been used by the Bureau to remove silt from the river on a yearly basis, therefore, discussions would be necessary to determine what enhancements could be completed in the area.

Director Zurn stated hard points placed in the river last year to alter the flow way from the north bank have been successful; however, improvements to the north bank are still needed. Staff continues to apply for DOW grants to improve the fish habitat in the area that would include improvements to the river bank.

Wil Smith/ EPURA Director stated the landscaping on the south parking lot was not completed because of the Bureau's annual silt removal. The EPURA Board approved funding for improvements to the picnic area on the south bank of the river across from the CVB, including additional picnic tables and low maintenance grass and shrubs at a cost not to exceed \$25,000. Director Smith stated a portion of the funds could be used to fund the design.

**Public Works Committee – November 20, 2008 – Page 2**

The Committee questioned why a previous landscape plan was not being utilized. The previous plan was limited and did not include the river. The Tree Board does not support the original plan as it does not contain native plants as requested by the Board. The requested plan would encompass a larger area, and therefore, the Tree Board would like a professional designer rather than staff to develop the plan.

Chairman Blackhurst stated a project of this size should be completed at one time, and could be funded from the Open Space Fund or Conservation Trust Fund rather than Public Works. Staff would review the uses of the funds to determine if funds could be utilized for the project.

After further discussion, **the Committee recommended approval of \$15,000 to contract with a landscape designer to develop a master plan for the arboretum and landscaping of the south parking area across from the CVB. Funding would be determined by staff.**

**REPORTS.**

1. Estes Park Downtown Transportation Study by PBS&J – Dir. Zurn reviewed the study. A traffic analysis was conducted for the downtown intersections and showed the intersections reached maximum capacity by 10:00 a.m. 30 to 40 days a year. By 2035 with no improvements, the number of days the intersections exceed capacity would triple to 90 days a year. Several alternatives were analyzed to determine the potential impacts of various changes to the street network. Three short-range roadway options were identified for final analysis, including Option 1 - all northbound Moraine Ave. traffic to turn right onto Rockwell Street with a pedestrian light across Moraine Ave. near Wiest and traffic southbound on Moraine would have the option to turn left on Rockwell; Option 2 – same configuration with the inclusion of a second pedestrian signal on Moraine at the existing mid-block crossing south of Rockwell St.; and Option 3 – same configuration as Option 2 with a signalized intersection at Riverside Dr. and Rockwell St. All three of the proposed alternatives could be completed within the existing Right-of-Way (ROW) and increases the Level-of-Service (LOS) allowing additional vehicles through the intersections. No improvements would lead to 70,000 vehicle hours/gallons of gas wasted, which equates to a large environmental issue. The Town has received a beautification grant from CDOT and has three years to spend the funds. Staff is seeking the Committee's approval to move forward with public input.

Committee discussion followed: the proposed changes would not be rejected by the West Elkhorn Ave. merchants; community input needs to be gathered prior to moving forward with any improvements; the Committee expressed concern with directing traffic away from the downtown corridor; questioned if the alternate routes could be seasonal; pedestrian crossings near Moraine and Elkhorn have created a hazard; concerned Rockwell may not be able to handle an increased volume of traffic; and with increased traffic on Riverside the pedestrian crossing near Riverside and Elkhorn restrooms could become difficult to use.

Staff commented the new traffic configuration would improve business downtown because traffic would be able to move through the intersections. Providing seasonal traffic routes would be possible but not esthetically pleasing, i.e. jersey barriers. The current pedestrian crossings are heavily used and short of physical barriers would continue to be used by visitors.

The Committee agreed the proposed traffic modifications should be presented to the public as soon as possible with a variety of times and dates to accommodate citizen's work schedules. The community must agree with the plan or it should

## RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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### Public Works Committee – November 20, 2008 – Page 3

not move forward. Administrator Halburnt stated staff would move forward on gathering public input.

Mayor Pro Tem Levine left the meeting at 10:20 a.m.

2. Construction Project Updates – Manager Sievers stated the connection between two phases of the Fish Creek Trail from Scott Avenue to Lakeshore Drive was completed by a local contractor this fall for approximately \$25,000. Virginia alley pedestrian/drainage improvements were completed with a retaining wall, curbing and two new pedestrian crosswalks on October 3<sup>rd</sup> under budget. The 2008 Street Improvement Project (STIP) was completed in conjunction with the YMCA paving contractor and completed the repaving of Stanley Ave., Crags Dr., Wiest parking lot and Virginia parking lot. Current projects continue to move forward with Fall River Trail Phase IV 90% completed and a month ahead of schedule. The improvements to the Elkhorn Ave. and Riverside Dr. are nearing completion and CDOT would begin installing then new signal poles. The roadways would be open for the Christmas parade. The contractor has provided a significant price reduction to complete sidewalk and planters in the parking area. Park staff would complete the landscaping of the planters this winter. Town staff should be commended for all efforts provided to complete this project.

Administrator Halburnt left the meeting at 10:30 a.m.

3. Traffic Impact Fee Study – Dir. Zurn stated a \$15,000 study would be needed to determine costs associated with transportation improvements and impact fees. Larimer County currently has an impact fee for transportation and parks for all building permits including commercial and single-family. Chair Blackhurst stated it would be important to have the information; however, the Board does not seem inclined to impose impact fees.
4. Bond Park Master Plan – Dir. Zurn stated the RFP is 60% complete and would move forward once the 2009 budget has been approved. There would be significant public input on the Master Plan as staff moves forward.

There being no further business, Chairman Blackhurst adjourned the meeting at 10:50 a.m.

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Jackie Williamson, Town Clerk