

POST Meeting Minutes

July 14, 2021

CALL TO ORDER

The POST Committee was called to order at 4:15 pm by Chair Jason Groves. Members present included Jason Groves, Amiee Beazley, Paul Hilts. Julie Kolar joined the meeting after it was started. Carol Hawk was absent. The meeting was held in-person and electronically via Zoom Conferencing.

Staff present included Susan Philp, Planning Director; Watkins Fulk-Gray, Staff Planner; James Lindt, Assistant Planning Director; Brian Passenti, Recreation Director; and Catherine Christoff, Town Engineer.

Guests: Michael Lipkin and Jeff Orsulak, Lipkin Warner Design; Stephanie Helfenbein, Sopris Engineering

AGENDA ITEMS

Approval of Minutes

M/S Paul and Amiee to approve the minutes from 6/23/21. Motion passed by a vote of 3 to 0.

Sopris Meadows Parcel 5 Sketch Plan Land Use Application

Susan introduced the project and described the location of it. It is the last major undeveloped part of Sopris Meadows. James said that the sketch application is for 155 dwelling units located between Willits Lane and the Lakeside Condos, as well as Park Modern and Willits Lake. The Applicant is proposing a road from Evans Road to Lakeside Avenue. Two buildings would include affordable housing, and the remainder of the buildings would be free market.

The Applicant also proposes to finish the lake and the trail around it. A sidewalk would connect to the Willits Lane Trail. They have also proposed a potential lake access point, including grading, a beach, and a walk-in/splash zone. A play area for the affordable housing is proposed as well, though those details have not been finalized. Susan noted that the lake counted toward the parkland dedication and improvement requirements for Sopris Meadows. The Town has been concerned with the lake and access to it, because it was an old gravel pit. The idea of the beach access point comes from Staff rather than the Applicant. Susan said that the Lakeside Townhomes have restrictions about owners recreating on the lake, which is why the Town recently put up signs. After improvements to the lake are finished, the Town may revisit this restriction.

Julie Kolar joined the meeting.

Michael Lipkin introduced himself and his team. He discussed the history of Willits, and how it was developed from dead, flat land. Michael said that this development would finish the trails and connections in Willits and displayed a map of the area.

Susan asked POST to weigh in on the lake, connectivity, and the park.

Amiee said she is very familiar with the area. She asked why they would want people swimming in the lake if it is the irrigation source for areas around there. She said this needs to be discussed with homeowners in the area. She is excited about the trail.

Paul asked about the location of the trail. James displayed it and said that the proposed trail connects to existing trail. Paul asked if parking on the map is public, and James replied that it is surface parking for the affordable housing. Staff has asked the Applicant to provide some parking for the public to access the lake and trail. Mr. Lipkin added that there is more parking at the rugby field, and that the proposed street would have street parking. Amiee asked about parking at the rugby field. Chris Beiser explained that currently the Town parks a few vehicles there, though no spaces are reserved specifically for the Town. He suggested that the beach would be a popular place to hang out and noted that the parking lot fills at certain times of year.

Jason asked how people would get from Willits Lane to the lake, and Mr. Lipkin responded that it would be along Lakeside Avenue. James clarified that there will be a sidewalk from the connector trail from the lake to Lakeside Avenue. Mr. Orsulak said the sidewalk would be five feet wide. Jason said he thinks the project looks great.

Paul said the project looks fine.

Julie complimented the Applicant on trying to finish the project. She likes the connectivity. She said usable bodies of water are wonderful assets, one of which there are not very many.

Susan summarized the feedback as liking the concept, appreciating the connectivity and the effort to finish the project, and liking the lake improvements, but wanting to get nearby homeowners' feedback about the lake. James said POST would be kept in the loop.

Discussion of Compostable Doggie Bags

Amiee said she has found that compostable bags are not strong enough to use as doggie bags, but there are "biodegradable" bags that are made in Denver and do work. She volunteered to connect with the Green Team to push the use of biodegradable doggie bags, like Aspen and Carbondale use.

Arbaney Park – Next Steps

James said that the pool opened this past weekend, though it is not fully done. Some items have temporary fixes, such as bathroom partitions, shower partitions, the floors, a circulation pump, a chemical controller, the slides (which may be powder coated in the off-season).

Jason thanked Staff for their efforts getting the pool open. He added that the robot pool seems to be the magnet of where people congregate, and Susan agreed.

Chris described problems with the trees around the park, which have been subject to construction stress. Mulch circles will be installed around them. He displayed photos of the trees and site. Chris asked if they want to leave the site as-is or try to do major treatments to the trees, such as root-feeding to deal with soil compaction, or if the trees should be replaced. He noted that most of Basalt's parks do not have much tree canopy, and he asked if POST wants to change this.

Susan noted that in the past they have talked about improving the playground area in Arbaney Park and to move the existing restrooms.

Julie said that they have studied Arbaney Park in detail. It is well-used, and their focus has all been on the pool, before focusing on the rest of the park and address questions about tree canopy. She said maintaining status quo is the right course for right now, before eventually looking at the park holistically.

Chris asked if he should do everything he can to save the trees that have been impacted by construction. He noted one tree inside the pool area will be relocated in the fall. He said he thinks two spruce trees should be saved. Susan noted that significant decisions about the location water line and trail were made with keeping those trees.

Julie said she doesn't like the idea of cutting down mature trees. She wants to consider sight lines and other factors. She does not want to plant new trees or new sod before doing the holistic planning for the park. Jason agreed, and suggested saving all the trees for now.

Chris suggested letting him know if there are sites they want to plant trees at, because they take 10-20 years to grow into a space.

Susan suggested taking a site visit to see the spatial relationships.

Other Project Updates

Basalt River Park

Susan updated the Committee that the contract for the River Park was approved by Town Council yesterday. Only one bid was received, though there had been numerous firms interested in it. She believes some bidders dropped out because

of the availability of concrete. Susan said that they received encouragement from the Council to bid Phase 2 of the project as soon as possible.

Skateboard Park

The features were delivered and installed, and the kids seem to appreciate them. She noted that some of the pieces were dropped off before they were installed, and some of the kids could not resist pulling the pieces out and using them.

Basalt Vista

The playground at Basalt Vista has been finished.

Capital Needs Committee

Paul said they are in the process of collecting public comment with the survey that has been mailed out. A public meeting will be held in early August. Not much discussion has been had about prioritizing the items on the list. He thinks the Committee is tuned into what the community wants.

Susan said she could send POST members slides that have been presented. She said affordable housing and green projects are high priority right now. A childcare facility is below that, and other things like a new town hall and public works facilities are below that. Parking in East Basalt ranked high as a need but was not so high in West Basalt.

Amiee asked if there are any Town-owned parcels that would be appropriate for affordable housing. She wondered if the answer to this question might affect the validity of the question being asked and requested to see it. Susan said that the Town does not own such a parcel, but an option could be for the Town to seek to buy one. She noted some examples of ones. Amiee asked about the feasibility of Parcel 9 in Sopris Meadows for childcare, and Susan said that it is not one desired by the Childcare Coalition.

Chris suggested considering the development of Parcel 9 it in tandem with Linear Park since they are adjacent.

Paul said there has also been discussion at the Capital Needs Committee on the role of each of the Town's committees, and whether they should simply describe needs, or be more involved and determine what would require additional bonds or not and let this factor into their project recommendations. Susan reminded POST that comments need to go to her and not to each other to prevent a meeting from happening without notice.

2022 Budget

Susan said the big project next year is Phase 2 of the River Park. A bathroom for Linear Park has also been identified, due to the nature of complaints being received. She said there will be more opportunities, but it is time to start thinking about their project list.

Julie said there is a lot to consider for the River Park, but it might be logical to circle back to Arbaney Park. Simple things like slack lines and plantings could be considered.

Susan noted that they have a master plan, and also noted that everything is very expensive right now. Chris noted that the playground may be reaching the end of its lifecycle. Amiee suggested asking an HOA near Arbaney Park to contribute toward playground costs. Susan said there is not a funding mechanism for the Elk Run area like there was for Willits. Jason concurred.

Susan noted that most of POST's funding would go toward the River Park and paying off the COPs. She gave POST the assignment to think about other projects for next year.

M/S Amiee and Paul to adjourn at 5:36 pm. Motion passed.