PORT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Town Board Room
807 Mountain Avenue
Town of Berthoud, Colorado
Monday, June 26, 2023, 6:00 p.m.

This is an IN-PERSON meeting at the location and time noted above

You may also join virtually using Zoom

Phone: 1-346-248-7799 or 301-715-8592
Web: www.zoom.us/join **Use this Meeting ID: 602 408 1190**

1. Call to Order – Meeting was called to order at 6:00PM.

2. Roll Call

- Tim Grover – Chair – Here
- Lauren Roth – Vice Chair – Here
- Anna Murphy – Secretary – Here
- Jose Cabrera – Here
- Carolyn Hobson – Here
- Callie West – Here
- Joe Donnelly – Not Here
- Daniel Hatton, BYAC Liaison – Not Here
- Karl Ayers, Trustee Liaison – Here
- Keith Knoll, Staff Representative – Here

3. Approval of Minutes – Wednesday, May 31, 2023

- L. Roth motioned to approve minutes from the previous PORT committee meeting. C. West seconded. No discussion. All in favor.

4. Public Comment – Non-Discussion Items

- **Public Comment – Non-arboretum** – None. *The PORT meeting transitioned to a joint PORT – Tree Committee meeting, with members from both committees present.*
- **Public Comment – Arboretum** – K. Knoll gave a high-level overview on the arboretum, noting at this phase, the design is conceptual. The Town Staff worked with Wenk Associates, Inc. (hereafter referred to as "Wenk"), based in Denver, CO,

Timothy W. Grover 8/2/23

on the design. K. Knoll also noted the design includes a pond on the property, as there's a non-potable Master Plan for the town.

- Mr. Tyler Kiggins and one additional colleague from Wenk working on the project were present. T. Kiggins shared an overview presentation of the proposed Arboretum design at Waggener Farm Park. Wenk would like to come back to both PORT and Tree committees at the end of Aug./early Sept. for another round of feedback. They would like to have a final, master plan/guiding document prepared for the Town by this December.
- T. Kiggins noted a couple of key ideas were kept in mind while designing the arboretum: 1) Honor/maintain the Berthoud heritage, 2) Incorporate water conservation strategies, 3) Memorial for the original property owner, 4) No focal point, 5) Preference for open landscape – mixed trail types 6) Incorporate nature play, and 7) Include signage.
- He also made some points as he walked through the design. Kiggins noted the addition of topography would allow people to get into the space while still focusing views to the West. He noted the "active edge" would be the area near the gravel parking lot on the West side. This area could include a crop circle/meadow with a center pivot for irrigation, community plots/gardens, and possible trees/orchards. He also noted some potential areas for art/nature-themed play.
- Regarding the trail, he noted the North side would be at the top of the hill, while the South side would be below (~20'). There would be a mix of shade and sun. Various types of trees, including oaks, cottonwoods, and conifers/evergreens as wind breaks would be planted in bunches around the trail, which would make for nice color palettes and shade over the seasons. In areas with steeper slopes, there could be trails going down the hills, possibly with rock/stonework.
- T. Kiggins noted the potential for an irrigation canal with the possibility of a play feature on the canal. Water could flow down to the irrigation pond. The pond could be designed in such a way that it wouldn't be muddy when it drains. There could be an opportunity for fishing.
- There could be an area for bird houses, bat houses, and/or an apiary on the Northern edge of the site.
- A couple numbers on the design were missing or out of place. This was noted by Wenk. After Kiggins' presentation, the rest of the public had time to speak.
- Mr. John Goresky came to the podium. He has served 23 years on the tree board, four years on town board, and several years on planning. He loved the pivot arm (center pivot) idea and thinks that should stay. He also noted it would be nice to show other types of irrigation, e.g., siphon tubes, polyethylene tubes, etc... He felt the proposed mounds/elevation change were in contrast to the property being a farm. He noted there are generally a lot of cottonwood stands in the area. Corn is a big thing around here, as are wheat and barley, and the thought of having a corn maze came to his mind. He hopes this design will attract a lot of birds. He noted water is a big deal here and stressed the importance of having supplemental water, year-round on trees.
- Ms. Jane (Waggener) Valere came to the podium. She was involved in the planning of the memorial; she noted her family would like the memorial by the pond or the entrance, but they have not finalized anything yet. Their preference is for this area to remain a farm/field because that's how it's always been. The theme should be agricultural in nature. She noted this property is seen from Hwy. 56, and she would like it to be a green space. She also noted there are two shares of water devoted to

the property, so water should not be a concern in terms of conservation and should be adequate to do what is wanted here. Trees will be a great addition, and it will be critical to have an irrigation system in place to water the trees. She appreciated all the work that's been put into the design phase thus far.

- Mr. Eric Hanson came to the podium. He noted this is the first time he's seen the design, and his initial impression was that it was a lot. It seemed to him like the 80 acres was trying to be everything for everybody. He would like to see things refined, reduced, and more focused. He had the following questions: 1) How many full-time employees is the Town planning on having to manage the arboretum? It seems like a lot of work. 2) What about water? Specifically, what's the functional plan for getting water to the plants (e.g., truck, drip lines, etc.)? This needs to be addressed early on. 3) In general, how will the species used in the design be selected? Will selection of non-invasives be taken into consideration?
- Ms. Carmen Farmer came to the podium. She works for Colorado Open Lands, which holds the conservation easement on the property. She appreciates the stewardship of this property. She noted there are two shares of water associated with the property. The conservation easement requires they be put to beneficial use. She noted Colorado Open Lands needs to understand the irrigation structure. She also noted there are specific requirements in terms of building a pond (e.g., type of storage rights needed).
- Pat Karsepeck gave her public comment via Zoom. She has been with the Tree Board and Tree Advisory Board for 30 years. She has a vested interest in this, since it was their idea to make this space an arboretum. She noted when she was on the tree board, they learned that grants would be turned down unless there was an irrigation design. She said the Town has done well in securing funds for trees; she recommended the Town look at applying for additional grants to secure the plantings on the property. She noted there have been various park designs, but nothing came through. She highlighted the importance of having an irrigation design/water delivery system and knowing the tree and water requirements before deciding where everything should go. She also stressed that Berthoud has very few open corridors and known as The Garden Spot. Planting/xeriscaping is efficient and wise, but at this particular corner, this is Berthoud's, "front door". She felt this space should be kept as the pioneers saw it, as the garden spot. Green is the name of the game. She would like to see all the water used as necessary and able for this project.
- John Goresky came back to the podium and recommended Wenk visit the arboretum at the CSU campus and to consult with CSU on trees. Native trees are high on the priority list, but they don't all have to be native.

5. Discussion Items

- **<u>A. Berthoud Arboretum – Presented by Tyler Kiggins – Wenk Associates, Inc.</u>**
    - After the presentation and public comment, the Tree and PORT committee members were given an opportunity to comment and ask questions.
    - C. West asked whether the gravel parking lot would be the main access and noted that entrance will be very important. She also brought up a previous PORT committee discussion about community gardens and noted they may not be realistic as they must be maintained by volunteers.

- One member commented on the nice design and asked if the main trail would be paved or crusher fines. Paved trails would be nice for handicap accessibility and future 5k run/walks.
- Multiple comments that having an open water/kids play area with the irrigation canals was a great idea. Question on whether the water would be cleaned before kids play in it. Other, similar kids play areas (e.g., Washington Park in Denver, CO) do not have the water treated before kids play in it. Group liked the more natural irrigation canal/open water creek idea, something more natural and less of a concrete culvert. There could be a headgate somewhere, something the kids could play with, a natural look. The open creek in Steamboat Springs was referred to (this creek has river rock).
- Comment that alfalfa would be a great crop to put in the center pivot area. Another question on whether to have a crop in the center pivot area.
- Question about access for farm equipment for the tree nursery and other areas needing equipment. Another comment on whether this is the right place to have a tree nursery, with reference to access and equipment. Access will be important. The idea to let the trees grow so there is a nice shady area was also mentioned.
- Suggestion to have to memorial site close to the entrance, so people see why this arboretum is here.
- Irrigation and the ability to maintain trees was again emphasized.
- There were two comments on #18 on the design (wildflowers). One committee member noted it would be nice to see more wildflowers, maybe closer to the entrance. Another committee member suggested to merge/move the two wildflower sections into one larger section close to Hwy 56. The committees generally liked this suggestion.
- Suggestion to select cottonwood varieties with minimal "fluff".
- Suggestion to have either natural rock or concrete benches (something more permanent), as wood degrades over time.
- Comments with concern that the pond would attract mosquitos. T. Kiggins noted the edge of the pond can be graded so fish can catch mosquitos (helps mitigate). Concern with algal blooms in ponds. Suggestion to look at a method to circulate water to help mitigate.
- Suggestion to have a community contest for bird/bat houses
- Suggestion to have a sledding hill on one of the hills.
- Suggestion to have QR codes but to also have signage throughout the trails, e.g., talking about the different types of trees.
- Suggestion to have a large, pavilion-type shade structure. This would be great for classes. This may not be possible with the easement.
- K. Knoll led a discussion on trail type preference. Consensus from the committees to have an 8' concrete trail with a 3' soft surface (crusher fines) next to the paved/concrete trail.
- The different types of plots can be phased into the property. K. Knoll noted they wanted to maintain at least five acres with an agriculture focus.
- Comment that the design strikes a nice balance between crops, trees, agriculture and aesthetics. Open fields are reflective of an agricultural heritage but also having mature trees would not displease anyone.

- Question on whether there are plans to pave the current parking lot. No plans so far.
- Comment that it will be nice to have the agriculture feel in proximity to the Berthoud Rec Center, which looks like a barn. Could a windmill be added in this area?
- Suggestion to have Paul provide input on trees, especially along Mountain Avenue, to make sure they're consistent and could fit with this design.
- Consensus from the committees to have natural rock benches; more, consolidated wildflowers, esp. on the SW corner; a trail connection on the SW corner.
- Suggestion to have a Waggener Farm Park sign on the SW corner or something to lead you into the arboretum.
- The microclimates with having some topography on the trails was noted. .
- Comments will be send to Colorado Open Lands.
- **Next Tree committee meeting: July 17th at 5:00PM.** *The Tree Commitee adjourned at 7:17PM.*

6. Staff updates – Parks, Open Space, Recreation, Trails

- K. Knoll – The bike park is still ongoing. It was delayed with all the rain in June. He noted the pump track seems massive compared to other pump tracks. Dirt and artificial turf are placed around the edges of the pump track, as well as native grass. One committee member noted bright, blinking lights at night near the bike park.
- Bike striping is ongoing throughout town. There are no plans for an official bike park opening ceremony. Opening anticipated in August.
- Pickleball courts at Waggener Farm Park start in a couple of weeks.

7. Committee updates

- C. Hobson – Question on whether there will be any education for drivers on the bike markings. Do drivers know right of way rules (e.g., 5th street)? In other towns, there's implementation on bike safety. Monthly newsletter, Facebook posts, signage were all suggested. Not all roads were wide enough to have bike lanes.
- L. Roth – Noted there have been huge clouds of small, green bugs near the bike parked. Asked if there's been any changes in this area.
- C. West – Thanked K. Knoll and town staff for organizing this joint meeting to get feedback on the arboretum. Very effective. She noted drivers are slowing down (Spartan and 5th) and taking note of the bike lane changes. Question on whether the Western edge of Hillsdale Park was Town property. She noted prairie dogs are encroaching around this community very fast and wondered if there were any plans for prairie dog management.
- K. Ayers – Town Park got approved. Working on scheduling.

8. Adjourn

- L. Roth motioned to adjourn meeting; C. West seconded, all in favor. PORT Committee meeting adjourned at 7:29PM.

Next PORT meeting: Wednesday, August 2, 2023: 6:00 pm. If you require a special accommodation, please contact the Town Clerk 24 hours in advance at (970) 532-2643.