Tuesday, March 15, 2011

PRESENT: 
Meredith Campbell 
Dylan Grange 
Jerry Hodgden 
Emmy Dimitroff 
Jenny Ricks 
Peter Gotseff 
Stephanie Sung 

ABSENT: 
Jeff Oxenford

STAFF: 
Rod Tarullo, Director of Parks, Recreation and Golf 
Paul Burkholder, Parks, Forestry, Cemetery Manager 
Amber Thill, Parks and Recreation Coordinator

ROLL CALL: 
Meredith Campbell, Chair of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board called the meeting to order at 7:00p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: 
The Agenda was approved on a motion by Jerry Hodgden, seconded by Stephanie Sung, and carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: 
The Minutes of February 15, 2011 were approved on a motion by Jerry Hodgden, seconded by Emmy Dimitroff, and carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT: 
Bob Nelson said he will be working this summer with the Golden Police Department to police the creek path. He has walked the creek for years and on weekends beginning in May he suggested eliminating bicycles, rollerblades and skateboards from the trail. It is causing traffic issues. Sooner or later someone will be hurt. It is becoming more and more congested.

CLEAR CREEK CORRIDOR MASTER PLAN PUBLIC HEARING:
Nicole from Wenk Associates said the last time we met one of the main items we discussed was the 8th Street connection. Wenk met with the City Manager, Public Works Director and staff and determined it is possible to make the secondary connection to 8th Street. Changes we have made to the draft plan include a policy section, several text edits, ADA connections, and language about kayak drop offs. We discussed strengthening the graphic in terms of connected green space. The proposed plan actually adds 5% more green space from the water treatment plant to the tennis courts. The library expansion was a question, especially regarding the farmers market space. We showed an illustration of the possible library expansion including farmer's market space. There is a few graphic edits we are still working on in the draft plan. We talked about a graphic regarding trail uses and we are working on including that in the plan also.

Nicole continued by saying City Council had a lot of very thoughtful comments when we presented the draft plan to them last week. The first was they wanted to formalize pedestrian connections from the north to the south including sidewalk connections from 8th Street, the corner down to 11th Street, and more unified way finding throughout the corridor. It also included the crossings at 11th and Ford. We discussed dispersing parking throughout the corridor and the possibility of some parking in the mini park along 11th. We also discussed the Colorado School of Mines lot which will no longer be available to the public. The School of Mines wants to keep the property natural so we will not open up that space on the south side. Council discussed including an option for the RV Park when the park runs its lifecycle. We have talked about making that a natural space with trees and shade that is quiet. Council wanted to prioritize filling in the pond and breaking that out as separate phasing. There was a question raised about the dog park. We discussed that the State mandates no
dog park in the corridor due to water quality issues but we will encourage one downtown. Council also raised a question about the 10th Street realignment and whether RVs could navigate the space. Nicole emphasized the spaces are angled and deep. It will work as a park boulevard. 10th currently runs through the heart of the park and that is not the best place for the road to be. She said that summarizes the updates made to the draft plan in the last two weeks.

Beth Bidwell, 1200 9th Street, said she was at the Council meeting and heard their comments and heard that parking and amenities should be spread throughout the corridor. The goal of the plan is to unify the Clear Creek Corridor and not just Lions Park. She said she was walking the creek herself the other night and felt we did not have places closer to downtown to picnic, etc.

Nicole said what Wenk has proposed to spread amenities includes the band shell in Parfet Park. We have reduced the parking at Police and Fire to allow more room for the trail and park space. We have extended the Library lot to open up space. We moved the History Museum to the south side of the creek to disperse use. It will allow space for picnic tables and a snack area on the north side of the creek in that location. When we look at municipal buildings out of the corridor, we are opening space close to downtown and providing more areas to picnic and recreate. The kayak inflatable structure has moved kayak action to Washington Street. It will provide a place for events and spreads use closer to downtown. Jenny Ricks asked if the kayakers will drop off closer to downtown. Nicole said yes we have added two drop-off locations.

Kirk Branson, 1121 9th Street, said he was at the Council meeting as well and Wenk Associates said they are putting elevated crosswalks on 10th Street. He thinks that will put more traffic on 9th Street. If you put elevated crosswalks all along 10th Street he said he will be using 9th Street himself.

Jerett Zuboy, 1186 9th Street, said some of the issues of usability in the corridor are the volume and we need to spread uses throughout the corridor. He said we may not have done enough to address total volume. We need to regulate parking or maybe further spread activity. We should focus on local uses and not regional use. This is especially important with regard to parking regulations to reduce total volume.

Diane Tiberi, 920 9th Street, said she was on the Clear Creek Corridor Advisory Committee and has been involved with this process since the beginning. She said Wenk mentioned 5% more green space but she said it adds a lot more than that in asphalt. In comparison we have lined the creek with parking. We want to entice people to the area. She said she is frustrated about comments being made over and over and the plan keeps moving forward without changes. She said Karen Oxman did not want the realignment of 10th Street and she doesn’t see the results of input over the last several weeks in the plan. Another part of the plan she disagrees with is the inflatable kayak structure. She said we never voted on an inflatable structure. All it will do is add more people to the corridor. She asked how it can be that 9th Street traffic volume will not increase. The kayak roll pond addition was added in between meetings and was also not discussed with the Advisory Board. We need to take into account that this park is next to a residential neighborhood. Permit parking and meters have not been discussed yet at this point. If you want to take your child to the playground you will pay $1 for the meter.

Bill Smith, 906 9th Street, said he likes the RV Park and if it is to be phased out a natural area would be nice in its place. He is glad 8th Street is still a possibility as it is the only way the plan would work. He said he agrees with comments that the Recreation Center lot is generally full. So it’s not offering a lot for newcomer parking. He said as a resident of 9th Street he is not looking forward to increased traffic. Residential parking permits if we have to get to that would be necessary. Many residents on 8th 9th and 10th don’t have garages and need their street parking. He is curious about the library, he said he thought we were going to bring it south up to the creek overlooking the creek. To have it go the other direction might not be as appealing. He is also curious about that. He is also concerned about the 10th Street realignment on Maple, he has never agreed with that option.

Gunner Tande, 116 12th Street, said some of his ideas have already been represented but he is generally concerned about adding additional paving for parking. He would like more consideration on leveraging what we have. Have we considered shuttling people and using the existing parking downtown or to encourage walking? One of the goals of this plan is to help a lot of others enjoy what Golden has to offer. We want to drive people to use downtown and generate tax revenue also and when they park in the Lions Park area they likely will not venture downtown. He commented that the RV Park is already paved and he would prefer that be additional parking in the future rather than Lions Park. The revenue we would lose after the RV Park goes away would offset the cost of building the new parking.

Chris Bidwell, 1200 9th Street, said he has to get permission from 23 people to work on their house. He said
Wenk interviewed creek users but did not go door to door contacting neighboring residents. This area gets a lot of use in the summer including kayak events, running events, farmers market, horse and carriage buggy, an ice cream truck; he wants to know if this plan is taking care of user conflicts. He sees kayakers, tubers, bikers. They all converge at the ball fields on Clear Creek Trail. That needs to be addressed. He asked how the new trail rules be enforced. The trail is blocked by its users. He doesn’t see how this plan reduces the user conflict. It seems the neighborhoods have the most impact and we will just increase the usage. Eventually everyone will stand shoulder to shoulder in the park.

Bob Nelson, 608 Wyoming Street, said he thinks it is a good plan and he likes a lot of it. Some of the things that concern him include moving the city offices to downtown. There is no space downtown and it will be very costly. He asked where this money is going to come from. He also suggested that maybe the kayakers have a bake sale and spend their money to buy the inflatable structure. The taxpayers have spent a lot of money on the kayak course over the years and he suspects 90 percent of its users don’t live here in Golden. He would like to see a community activity area as opposed to this regional amenity. He said 80 to 90 percent of people that have their picnic set up in the corridor are not Golden residents using the creek.

Eric Starbor, 908 9th Street, had a question as to why the kayak lot is going away. Where did the parking go? Now it is green space. He also said if Colorado School of Mines won’t allow use of the lot on the south side of the creek for the public, the city could strong arm Mines. He asked why the snow removal lot is not parking. Eric said during the public process participants wanted more use on the south side for amenities not parking. He added it makes a lot more sense to put parking there and not along 10th. The goose problem will not go away without the pond. The geese are walking everywhere. We need to look at parking on the south side snow lot. During the farmers market many people currently park there.

Simon Maybury, 1151 9 St, said he wanted to comment that the corridor is long and narrow. It has places where people want to go. The center is near the ball fields. The entrance is at 10th Street to the corridor and the stupidest place to put parking is on the opposite end. He said if the 8th Street entrance is built it will increase parking on 10th Street. People coming in from 8th Street will go out 10th Street. Everyone who comes in on 10th will also go out 8th in order to get on Highway 58. Torsten Lyon, 1160 9th Street, said we use the Community Center and bike path. When we are coming from our home we come down 8th Street to 10th Street and get back to the parking lot at GCC. If 10th is closed we will drive down 9th Street. She said she is totally against closing 10th or paving the park. Filling in the pond is probably a good idea. She said the parking needs to be spread out and emphasis on downtown businesses. She said she makes her living downtown and the corridor is too congested.

Samara Wilson, 1170 9th Street, said two things, we like that we are trying to improve the city. We don’t want to be unwelcoming to visitors. It would be wonderful to push them towards downtown. Her 7 year old said “mommy make sure they don’t destroy the park and put cars there.” Heather Eckles, 808 Arapahoe Street, said we use the Community Center and bike path. When we are coming from our home we come down 8th Street to 10th Street and get back to the parking lot at GCC. If 10th is closed we will drive down 9th Street. She said she is totally against closing 10th or paving the park. Filling in the pond is probably a good idea. She said the parking needs to be spread out and emphasis on downtown businesses. She said she makes her living downtown and the corridor is too congested.

Drew Wilson, 1170 9th Street, said moving parking closer to downtown is what this is all about. The one thing he has noticed is everything is highlighted except 9th Street on the Master Plan Map. Is it a possibility with access from 8th do we need access from 9th to the Community Center. Can we close 9th Street? Nicole said we looked at closing 9th and the recommendation from traffic planners showed closing 9th will actually cause turn around traffic and could even become a Community Center drop off area. He said he lives close to there and people learn soon the road is closed. Nicole said if it became an issue they would be willing to look at other options including closing 9th Street.

Henry Tiberi, 920 9th Street, said he has lived on 9th for 20 years. His concern is global he has been on several city boards. The metric of success tends to be tax revenue and how many people visit. The metric for this plan seems to be how to make the corridor better. We want really cool stuff. Splash is an example of taking
away a community pool and replacing it with a regional amenity. He asked Wenk and the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board what is your metric for success? Are you looking to increase resident visitors or out of town visitors? He said visitors leave a lot of trash, create crowds and may not care. How will you measure the success? Splash isn’t successful. Secondly, how much was the consulting contract for this project? Another question is what is the ratio is, what number of parking spaces is actually required for a park of this size. Regarding the dog park, what is the actual law? Is it Federal or State mandated? We need to explore answers to these questions.

Jeremy Sides, 80 Clear Creek Lane, said he generally bikes on the Clear Creek Trail. His concern is the out of Golden people that come for tubing and to throw their trash. He said he will ride very slowly. The two new bridges are great but what he has seen is an influx of trash. He said he loves the trail which gets him to his coffee shop and that’s what we need to get other people to do. If they are going to pollute or system then we need them to spend dollars in the City of Golden.

Richard Eckles, 808 Arapahoe Street, said he loves Golden and it is growing like crazy. It’s getting so busy it’s hard to handle. He said he really views the asphalt in the park as an issue. Relocations of city facilities blow his mind. They just built the fire station. The 8th Street entrance is a good idea as a two way street. The RV Park is dated and it would be nice to open the usage of the space. Why are there baseball fields in the middle of the park? If we are trying to increase green space, that area shouldn’t be dedicated to baseball or softball.

Nicole said the ball fields are reconfigured with the purpose of green space, they are not meant for league play and the fences are removed. It is intended to be an open festival space.

Meredith Campbell said in response to the question regarding the cost of the plan, funds for the consultants were contributed from a Grant from Jefferson County Open Space. It included a 50% match from the City of Golden. It was approximately $176,000 total. She said she may agree with the Coors and Mines statements. The City is continuously negotiating with Mines. The South Side of the Creek is their property; however, and we can’t tell them what to do.

Nicole said the dog park discussion was from a meeting with Public Works Department staff. They had received a letter from the State of Colorado which stated a dog park should not be within so many feet of the creek. She can provide more information at a later time; she does not have that documentation with her.

Beth said that the neighborhood is also very concerned about the impact of the lighting and that non-impact lighting needs to be included in the plan.

Robert Toohill, 1217 9th Street, said he is confused on Coors. Everyone is scared of them. The worst part of the creek is in front of Coors. They don’t give back to the community. We may need to beautify and open up the space in front of Coors. There is also no reason from tunnel one down we couldn’t have the same amenities. School of Mines is the same. He said he lives on 9th Street and doesn’t want permit parking. His house is situated for the view and he likes the pond. Parking on the south side in the snow lot could also be a great spot for kayak input. The bank continually erodes. The 11th Street neighborhood takes a lot already but let’s put some pressure on Colorado School of Mines. Every baseball player and football player who uses the Lions ball fields carries a duffle bag they are not going to walk from the parking lot so far away. So many people use the ball fields he doesn’t see all these people walking that far.

Nicole said the park discussion was from a meeting with Public Works Department staff. They had received a letter from the State of Colorado which stated a dog park should not be within so many feet of the creek. She can provide more information at a later time; she does not have that documentation with her.

She said regarding the question about shuttling people downtown, the written report covers that and also addresses policies in terms of permitting which are beyond this plan but will be recommendations of the plan. In terms of lighting, it will be a recommendation in the written report. The ball fields are no longer for league play. The large groups will no longer use the ball fields.

Nicole said in terms of user conflicts, addressing the issue is a huge piece of the plan. It was one of the big reasons for realigning 10th to the north. Most of the conflicts occur on the creek edge. A street also makes it very congested. By shifting it north we can provide split trails for different user groups. It does narrow at the RV Park and we have removed spaces at the RV Park to accommodate this. There is a soft trail for joggers and a
paved trail. The realignment of 10th reduces the user conflicts. Beth Bidwell asked if we can have 10th Street as a closed road to reduce conflict. Nicole said we had options during previous public meetings showing just that which were defeated. Beth asked how many people attended these meetings. She said tonight’s meeting has more. Beth asked if we could vote tonight on the realignment. Peg said every table was full in this room with a much larger crowd at previous meetings where the realignment of 10th Street was discussed. Nicole said it is a balance. Jonah said the input statistics are available online from previous meetings and in the plan document.

Jerry Hodgden said there has been a lot of input from the public throughout this year long process. He said he has been on the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board for 16 years. He was on a committee with GURA working on the Downtown Character Plan as well. He said he was integral in bringing this plan to fruition. As a result we have looked at the corridor as a park itself. So we decided to develop a Master Plan for the park aside from the Downtown Plan. This plan is not a blueprint. We don’t have the money to make these changes right now. A master plan is only a guideline. We are not going to build right now. We need ideas so that as we have funding we can make improvements. It could be 20 years or more down the road. We are all attacking this project as if tomorrow morning we are going to tear up 10th Street.

When the Vision 2010 Plan was being considered we considered realigning 10th Street. 10 years later and 10th Street is still in the park. We are all getting very excited about what we are going to do. By the time it comes time to start building phases of the plan we will have public process for each element of the recommendations. What’s going to happen is we are trying to build a guideline to keep the corridor from being developed in a haphazard manner. He said one day he saw an amphitheater being built on the creek. It was a Public Works project that wasn’t presented to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. If we don’t protect the creek we cannot guide its development. We have had a yearlong public process. Wenk will provide the plan and then Council and the Board will have a guiding document that protects existing amenities and helps guide the future development. It will happen in time. Each individual amenity will be discussed individually. Jerry said personally he feels we had several public meetings all year and the 9th Street residents chose not to attend. Now that we have a plan 9th Street is upset. We are listening. Wenk is making changes daily trying to make accommodations for you.

Diane Tiberi said they need to make sure the plan of record meets the neighborhood needs. Jerry said this plan isn’t going to make a huge amount of difference there will be additional meetings for specific projects that are public. Jenny Ricks said a lot of the traffic slowing and parking issues will be determined as the elements are being built. She lives on 8th Street and may even be more affected than some of the neighbors with regard to the traffic. We want a green space and a linear park. She said we have talked about user conflict and we are trying to divide some of the uses. The public process showed Lions Park as the park that most people wanted to use for festival space. She said this plan is local. The only increased active recreation is the enhancement of an existing amenity, the kayak course. We haven’t added anything new and regional. The kayak course already existed. She thinks this plan is actually locally focused. She said the traffic engineers need to guide the city including parking meters, etc. That may not be a part of this process and can be determined in the future. Rod Tarullo said it is mentioned in the plan. Nicole said it often comes up in public comment but the city needs to determine the meter parking and specific details.

Peter Gotseff said as a Parks and Recreation Advisory Board member who has been a part of the process since the beginning, the concept is solid. He said it would have been great to have all of you involved early and fully during the entire public process. He said his personal opinion is that he doesn’t like the realignment of 10th Street either. He said he is one person. The cohesive park is an improvement to what we have. He asked if the neighbors remember the way the creek used to look when CSMRI was a terrible thing to live next to. He reminded the neighbors that before the kayak course was built, the creek didn’t look the way it does now. Downtown was once DOA. He said he would hate to think we want to stop improving Golden. We can nitpick the details forever, but the plan is solid and the details on the west side can be worked out one at a time. It won’t happen tonight.

Stephanie Sung said she agrees with Peter. She said she would like to knock down every city building and have a great park with no asphalt. There are 17,000 people in Golden and we can’t all walk to the park like the neighbors can. She said she understands why parking is there. She appreciates that this will affect the neighborhoods. If she hears someone from 8th Street drives to the Community Center then there are a lot more drivers coming from much further. We are happy with the attendance we have received at public meetings throughout the last year and it was a fair and equitable process.
Emmy Dimitroff said she thinks that for such a large project there has been good overall participation. There have been lots of compromises some which she agrees with and some which she doesn’t. She came to the meetings and voiced her opinion. This plan is a collection of the public process and the year of meetings and information gathering and the compromises overall have created a good plan that is fair.

Meredith Campbell said there are elements of the plan she likes, her husband lived on 8th Street for a year. She would love to live in the surrounding neighborhood and to be able to walk to such wonderful amenities. She said she covets your neighborhood. You have a wonderful advantage being able to walk to the library and the creek. The other issue that we run into with parking, meters and permits is we have a library that services the County and she doesn’t see that metered parking is a good idea for other stakeholders. There are elements on the plan that are expensive and may or may not ever be done. The south side trail is the highest priority in her mind so she hopes we can work out everything with Colorado School of Mines. The 8th Street connection is also very important and she is happy it is in the plan. Her child will not have the advantage of playing in the creek offshoot because by the time we do that he will be in college at Colorado School of Mines. She would like him to be able to enjoy some of these elements. As mentioned there are many compromises. There are big special interest groups that have been represented including the gardeners, boating community, and more. This plan will never appease everyone. Wenk did a good job trying to mitigate concerns. We have added several meetings including this one to try to accommodate the needs of the neighborhoods. She said she doesn’t like the farmers market on Saturdays when she is trying to get to the library. We all have different priorities and needs. We have tried and the community has participated. We appreciate the feedback and input and we have made several changes due to 9th Street concerns. City Council will make the final decision on approval of this plan.

Jerry Hodgden said he is sure some of the things said tonight will make more modifications to the plan. If City Council passes the plan, when we have funding, we will use the plan to make decisions one at a time.

Jerry Ganiere wanted to remind people that ADA is very important so please support ADA improvements in this project. He started working with the city during the Walkability Study. The Billy Drew Bridge was one element that needed to be improved to meet ADA. Two years later he hopes that we support ADA and this plan will actually address the Billy Drew Bridge. When money is available ADA will be important to address in this plan one step at a time.

Diane asked if the plan addresses ADA. Jerry said not enough. There was an audit and in 1991 the American’s with Disabilities Act. A lot of progress has been made recently and Dan Hartman and Rod Tarullo have been really supportive. We have more to do. ADA is important for everyone. Sidewalk treks are another example of an existing issue. After two blocks you will have a headache. The same goes for babies in strollers. We are now using smoothing and the new Jackson Street improvements show that as well as new trails in the park.

Jerry Hodgden said we are at a point where we have done what we can do to bring the public together. Wenk has provided a 90% complete plan and they have modifications they will make as a result of this meeting. Jerry Hodgden made a motion to have Wenk Associates bring their changes to the next Parks and Recreation Advisory Board meeting for the Board to review and make a recommendation to Council, Peter Gotseff seconded the motion, and the Board agreed unanimously. Meredith suggested the April 5th Meeting be a regular business meeting rather than a study session. Jerry Hodgden made a motion to change the April 5th Study Session to a Regular Meeting, Stephanie Sung seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS: None

ADJOURN:
A motion to adjourn was made by Jerry Hodgden, seconded by Stephanie Sung, and carried unanimously.