

# **CARSON CITY OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

## **Minutes of the March 7, 2005 Meeting**

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A regular meeting of the Carson City Open Space Advisory Committee was scheduled for 6:00 p.m. on Monday, March 7, 2005 in the Community Center Sierra Room, 851 East William Street, Carson City, Nevada.

**PRESENT:** Vice Chairperson Dan Jacquet  
Michael Fischer  
Wayne Perock  
Howard Riedl  
Bruce Scott

**STAFF:** Linda Ritter, City Manager  
Roger Moellendorf, Parks and Recreation Department Director  
Juan Guzman, Open Space Manager  
Vern Krahn, Park Planner  
Lee Plemel, Principal Planner  
Kathleen King, Recording Secretary

**NOTE:** A tape recording of these proceedings is on file in the Clerk-Recorder's Office, and is available for review during regular business hours.

**CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL (1-0007)** - Vice Chairperson Jacquet called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. A quorum was present. Chairperson Hartman and Member Bird were absent. Vice Chairperson Jacquet welcomed Member Perock.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDIZED ITEMS (1-0016)** - None.

**1. ACTION ON APPROVAL OF MINUTES - January 24, 2005 (1-0017)** - Member Fischer moved to approve the minutes. Member Scott seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0-1, Member Perock abstaining.

**2. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA (1-0024)** - Mr. Guzman requested Vice Chairperson Jacquet to modify the agenda to address item 3-C prior to item 3-A.

**3. AGENDA ITEMS:**

**3-A. DISCUSSION ONLY REGARDING CARSON CITY'S INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT OF BOARDS, COMMITTEES, AND COMMISSIONS (1-1418)** - Ms. Ritter provided background information on the boards, commissions, and committees internal audit, and reviewed the administrative and policy recommendations included in the audit report. She noted that this Committee develops an annual work plan. She advised of her intent to recommend that each of the advisory committees develop an annual work plan for submission to and approval by the Board of Supervisors at an annual joint meeting.

Ms. Ritter reviewed the auditor's recommendation to consolidate the Open Space Advisory Committee, the Carson River Advisory Committee, the Shade Tree Council, and the Parks and Recreation Commission. She requested input from the Committee members, and advised that she will be providing the feedback to the Board of Supervisors. In response to a question, she advised that the auditor did not specifically

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identify overlapping functions of the four advisory committees. She noted interests in common between this Committee and the Carson River Advisory Committee. She explained that the auditor was charged with considering operating efficiencies. In response to a further question, she advised that there are very few formal recommendations which are forwarded from the advisory committees to the Board of Supervisors. She reiterated that annual work plans will increase the opportunity for communication between the Board of Supervisors and the advisory committees.

Member Scott expressed the opinion that the Parks and Recreation Commission and the Shade Tree Council address "more urbanized" issues. He expressed the opinion that it would be inappropriate for this Committee to be consolidated with the Parks and Recreation Commission "because they are quite different things." He acknowledged that the Carson River Advisory Committee and this Committee have many common elements. In response to a comment, Mr. Guzman explained that the input and recommendations generated by the advisory committees are generally used at staff level to incorporate into staff reports which are forwarded to the Planning Commission and/or the Board of Supervisors. Ms. Ritter advised that the Carson River Advisory Committee and the Shade Tree Council have evolved into advocacy groups rather than strictly functioning as advisory committees. She advised of having inquired of the two committees' members as to their interest in formalizing themselves as advocacy groups.

In response to a question, Ms. Ritter advised that this Committee is established as advisory to the Board of Supervisors. Member Riedl expressed support for submitting an annual work plan to the Board of Supervisors. He commented on the large number of advisory committees in Carson City, and expressed the opinion that "it's a great system." He advised of having received comments from members of the community with regard to confusion over which advisory committee to address, and frustration at being required to appear before four advisory committees. He suggested refining the system to make it easier for the citizens to be heard.

(1-1607) Mr. Nowlin expressed agreement with Member Riedl's comments; but noted that if someone has an interest in a particular issue, "they learn which ones are involved and they go to multiple meetings."

With regard to advocacy versus advisory, Member Scott expressed the understanding of his role, as an advisory committee member, to relay public input, evaluate information, and make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors "based on an active process to reach out to the community as the open space first stop," and to bring to the Board of Supervisors the distillation of what the process represents for their consideration. He expressed the opinion that this Committee should be somewhat proactive so that the Board of Supervisors doesn't receive a recommendation from the Committee and then have large numbers of citizens appear at their meetings to testify on the same matters.

Member Fischer suggested that, from a fiscal standpoint, consideration should be given to consolidating advisory committees if the associated costs are "outrageous." Ms. Ritter advised that this would be a policy decision of the Board of Supervisors. She responded to additional questions regarding costs associated with advisory committee meetings. Member Fischer provided historic information on this Committee and expressed the opinion that it has matured to the point that combining it with the Parks and Recreation Commission would create a problem. Vice Chairperson Jacquet agreed that the Committee "has done a very good job of staying on point with the ordinance." Member Scott suggested that the more challenges and work assigned to fewer number of advisory committees, "the more you're going to be dependent on people who may have the time but not necessarily the breadth of expertise." He commented that the quality

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of committee members can make a big difference. He noted that this is a good Committee with a breadth of interest, experience, and background which contributes to its quality.

Vice Chairperson Jacquet provided background information on his work experience, and commented that the Carson River Advisory Committee (“CRAC”) is dealing with “a lot of issues that are beyond open space,” including water quality, treated effluent, riparian health, etc. He expressed the opinion that the CRAC has a value “if it’s important for the Board of Supervisors to be advised on those kinds of issues.” He advised that the CRAC provides different advice than what may be provided by someone such as Utilities Operations Manager Tom Hoffert. The CRAC considers water issues related more to recreation, natural features, etc. Vice Chairperson Jacquet expressed the opinion that the CRAC “is worthwhile and doing a good job.” He thanked Ms. Ritter for her attendance and presentation.

**3-B. ACTION TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE 2005-06 OPEN SPACE BUDGET TO THE CARSON CITY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS (1-0757)** - Mr. Guzman reviewed the staff report and the budget materials, which were distributed prior to the start of the meeting. Member Scott referred to Mr. Guzman’s expanded role as the City’s property manager, and discussed the importance of the Utilities Division contributing funding toward this responsibility as it pertains to management of the watershed properties, both those which were burned in the Waterfall Fire and those which weren’t. He noted that watershed management in the area of the Waterfall Fire will require close coordination with the U.S. Forest Service. Mr. Guzman explained that the funding allocation was not reflected in the revenues because of the decision to keep the two budgets separate for the time being. A Memorandum of Understanding has established that the Utilities Division will pay for these services, in addition to funding an Administrative Assistant position. In response to a question, Mr. Guzman explained that there had not yet been any official notification with regard to appraisal of the Bernhard property, and that the figures reflected in the budget materials were “very conservative.”

Mr. Guzman requested the Committee’s input with regard to the FY 05-06 Goals and Objectives. Member Scott expressed the opinion that the City should continue pursuing Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act (“SNPLMA”) funding. In response to a question, Mr. Guzman advised that the organizational chart is part of the budget materials. He reiterated that funding for the property management portion of his responsibilities will be allocated from other departmental budgets as provided for in the Memorandum of Understanding. He acknowledged that his position is still subject to the Parks and Recreation Director. Mr. Guzman responded to questions regarding management of watershed properties. He advised that he will most likely have input into the management decisions; however, Utilities Department staff will be ultimately responsible for making final decisions.

In response to a question, Mr. Guzman advised that the administrative assistant job description has been drafted and is in the process of being reviewed. He described the responsibilities of the property management administrative assistant. He provided background information on how the property management responsibilities came to be assigned to him. He advised that Chairperson Hartman has expressed concern with regard to the interim time which will require more concentration on property management and less on the Open Space Program. Ms. Ritter responded to questions regarding her vision for the administrative assistant position and responsibilities. She discussed the need to define the property management function within the City organization, and advised that the most efficient approach was to assign it to Mr. Guzman, who already had the expertise. She expressed the opinion that the change will benefit the Open Space Program.

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Member Scott commented that the Open Space Advisory Committee will continue to advocate open space even in the management of watershed properties. Member Fischer expressed concern that management of watershed lands, which this Committee was not involved in purchasing, may eventually involve use of open space funding. He expressed the opinion that the Question #18 proponents did not envision their tax dollars being allocated toward management of property the Open Space Program did not purchase. Vice Chairperson Jacquet requested Mr. Guzman to agendaize, for a future meeting, discussion of watershed property management as related to the open space ordinance. He expressed concern that co-mingling property management may send a mixed message to the community.

Mr. Guzman reviewed the FY 04-05 Prior Year Achievements, and requested the Committee members' input. He and Ms. Ritter responded to questions regarding various budget line items. Member Riedl reviewed the anticipated time table for completion of the comprehensive master plan process. He noted that the Open Space Master Plan element is now seven years old, and suggested including an update as a FY 05-06 goal. He inquired as to whether the contractual services line item would cover such an expense. Mr. Guzman anticipates that the Open Space Master Plan element will need to be adjusted in light of the comprehensive master plan and the parks, recreation, and trails master plan updates. He expressed the opinion that until these master plan updates are completed, the Open Space Master Plan element is fine. Member Riedl expressed the hope that there will be some flexibility. He advised of Question #1 funding available to do open space plans. Mr. Guzman acknowledged that Question #18 pays 2% of Mr. Moellendorf's salary. **Member Fischer moved to approve the 2005/2006 Open Space budget and forward it to the Board of Supervisors. Member Riedl seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.** Member Scott requested Mr. Guzman to agendaize review of the memoranda of understanding.

**3-C. DISCUSSION ONLY REGARDING STATUS OF THE CARSON CITY MASTER PLAN UPDATE (1-0034)** - Mr. Plemel distributed, to the Committee members and staff, copies of the handout which was provided at a recent Envision Carson City open house. He provided a brief overview of his and Mr. Krahn's responsibilities associated with the master planning process. He reviewed the handout, and discussed the purpose of the master planning process. He advised that approximately 120 people signed in at the open house, and estimated that more were in attendance. Staff is in the process of compiling the comments and input received, and it will be posted to the web site within the next couple weeks. Mr. Plemel discussed the plan to refine the proposed general scenarios further based on the input received. He anticipates the next round of public meetings to be scheduled in early May.

Mr. Krahn advised that Parks and Recreation Department staff is working hand-in-hand with Planning and Community Development Department staff to update the parks, recreation, and trails master plan. He explained that the trails plan will be developed into a comprehensive plan from the existing Bicycle System and Eagle Valley Trails Plans. He advised of the public opinion survey which will be mailed next week to 3,000 recipients. Staff and the consultants are hoping for a return of approximately 600 surveys. Mr. Krahn advised that general land planning questions were included in the survey, together with parks, trails, and recreation questions. He further advised that the trails plan is in draft form. Representatives of the Equestrian Alliance, OHV user groups, Muscle Powered, the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Forest Service, and other agencies will provide input and in-field verification to the draft plan prior to submitting it for general public review.

Mr. Plemel reviewed and described the three draft scenarios which were displayed in the meeting room, and included in the agenda materials. He responded to questions regarding the densities contemplated in

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scenario 1. In response to a further question, he advised that City staff has not developed any scenario with a foregone conclusion. He acknowledged implications of each scenario, and advised that, as a practicing planner, infill development is more efficient and provides for multi-modal transportation. Public input with regard to the type of community in which the residents want to live is important. Mr. Plemel expressed the opinion that the scenario chosen should be a community decision. In response to a question regarding the scenario which best benefits the City economically, Mr. Plemel advised that an economic consultant has been retained to analyze each of the scenarios. He noted that private ownership of land adds to the City's tax rolls. On the other hand, in a compact development scenario, making the value of a square foot of property more valuable by restricting it could also add value in terms of property tax. Mr. Plemel noted that scenario 3 would be more expensive regarding infrastructure maintenance. He advised that the cost of the various scenarios will all be analyzed through the master planning process.

Member Fischer commented that compact urban growth usually indicates a general direction of "up." He inquired as to whether any of the scenarios include high rise residential development. Mr. Plemel advised that this would be a component of the discussion of each scenario. Height as well as smaller, denser lots could be considered. Mr. Plemel anticipated that increased height in the downtown area would be considered for creation of additional residential and employment opportunities.

In response to a question, Mr. Plemel advised that the City is not throwing out the existing master plan. The hope, through the current master planning process, is to integrate and recognize the transportation utilities and other impacts of land use decisions more so than in the past. Mr. Plemel advised of inquiries regarding the reason for updating the City's 1996 master plan. He noted that many things have changed since then, and land use planning has become somewhat reactionary. He advised that the first Carson City Master Plan was adopted in 1956. He noted that master plans evolve, and acknowledged that the City's master plan, as a policy document, has been modified over the years. Mr. Guzman commented that the master plan has not been changed "all that much" over the years. He reviewed small modifications with regard to allowing multi-family dwellings in one-acre zoning districts, and extending single family 12,000 and single family 8,000 zoning toward the southern portion of town. He acknowledged that the Carson-Tahoe Regional Medical Center development was a more significant change. He commented that Carson City doesn't have huge areas which have been redesignated for growth, such as in Douglas County.

Member Scott commented that the Open Space Master Plan element, in concert with parks and trails, "is a really critical part of our quality of life." Achieving higher densities will require keeping in mind the community's quality of life and how it might be enhanced. Member Scott expressed the opinion that the community's quality of life can be improved at the same time densities are increased. He suggested considering urban open space, not so much in regard to holding large blocks of urban land, but allowing for the support of larger open space needs already identified as primary goals, including the Carson River and the east and west side viewsheds. He discussed the importance of providing developers more detail, more assistance, and more information on how to accomplish "the right thing." He expressed support for improving the downtown area by establishing standards, considering parking which would allow for more mixed use activities, public/private partnerships, consideration of redevelopment. He discussed the need to be creative, and commented that although open space is "only a piece ..., we don't want to get our piece lost in the urban area." He noted that linkages, trails, flood control, and corridors are all important, but suggested that this Committee should be focused on the open space vision with regard to input to the master planning process. He expressed a preference for the Committee to be more proactive than reactive.

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Mr. Krahn expressed appreciation for Member Scott's comments. He explained that Parks and Recreation Department staff is considering ways to respond appropriately to each scenario. He advised that open space in the urban areas is used by many residents as "a back yard park." As those areas are decreased or made inaccessible, the pressure will grow. Parks and Recreation Department staff have considered levels of service with the master planning consultants. Carson City is "way below" the national standard for neighborhood parks; however, the northern portion of town is the only area where this seems to be an issue. Questions were included in the survey to confirm Parks staff's suspicion that people are using open space lands adjacent to the more rural residential areas. Mr. Krahn reiterated the importance of considering quality of life associated with each scenario.

Member Reidl commented on the limited resources available to carry out the various scenarios, and discussed the importance of carefully considering how to provide developers incentive to provide for urban trail connectivity. He expressed the opinion that the Committee and City staff have done a great job preserving the viewsheds and the River corridor prioritized in the Open Space Master Plan element. He suggested that Scenario 1 might be less dependent upon vehicles, so that development incentives could be provided for opening businesses, centralizing parking, and providing for wider sidewalks or bike paths. The urban expansion scenario would have different types of incentives. Member Riedl expressed the hope that whatever scenario is chosen, the City will provide incentives to investors and developers to provide for trails.

Member Fischer requested staff to consider modes of transportation from the east, north, and south portions of town if the urban center becomes more concentrated over the next twenty to thirty years. He discussed his experience growing up in Akron, Ohio, which implemented a trolley system at one time, and during a recent visit to Thailand, which implemented a sky train. He suggested that these types of transportation systems pay for themselves. Mr. Guzman discussed the importance of ensuring nothing is done which would prevent future development and implementation of a transportation system.

Mr. Plemel acknowledged that once the community decides on a scenario to pursue, infill development may be a consideration within ten years. He advised of development pressure on the City's existing lands. He has noticed the increase, in the last year, of property owners and developers requesting to change commercial and industrial properties to residential. Vice Chairperson Jacquet inquired as to how the existing Open Space Master Plan element will fit with the current master planning process. Mr. Krahn advised that Mr. Guzman represents this Committee very well as a member of the land use plan management team. He further advised that completion of the comprehensive master plan may have cascading effects on the other master plan elements. He suggested revisiting the Open Space Master Plan element and considering its provisions through the planning process. Mr. Plemel advised that inasmuch as the refined scenarios may affect the current Open Space Master Plan element, input from and the continued involvement of this Committee is anticipated.

Member Scott reiterated his earlier suggestion of being more proactive, and agendaizing for discussion and action at a future meeting the Committee's input and recommendations as related to open space. He further reiterated his suggestion to provide incentives for open space as part of new development, "and other things which might be a step or two past what we've done before." Mr. Plemel agreed this would be appropriate. Member Fischer discussed the concept of open space in perpetuity, and the importance of considering the

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elements of the Quality of Life Initiative in the master planning process. He suggested that the language of Question #18 should be reviewed in conjunction with the master planning process, and that every new Committee member should receive a copy of it.

Vice Chairperson Jacquet suggested considering each of the three scenarios in light of the Open Space Master Plan element. He commented that Scenario 3, Urban Expansion, will encroach on land identified as open space, and that Scenario 1 would try and respect those designations. Vice Chairperson Jacquet suggested it will be difficult to comment without being able to see the details.

Member Riedl suggested the Committee may want to be very involved in phase three of the master planning process. Member Scott advised that Carson City's master plan will become a document which federal agencies will look to, and emphasized the importance of the Committee's input with regard to open space goals. Vice Chairperson Jacquet suggested an additional feature of the plan is its potential influence on the Carson City Public Lands Management Act. He suggested that the federal act may be helpful with the perpetuity issue.

(1-0679) Jon Nowlin expressed appreciation for the comments regarding the method by which to involve this Committee and open space values with the master planning process. He expressed the opinion that when the citizens voted for Question #18 in 1996, most of them thought in the context of open space lands in federal hands being a constant. He advised of living in a neighborhood that once was BLM property with many neighbors whose properties are bounded by BLM property. "Their assumption always is, when they buy their home in that context, the federal land will never change. But it does." He referred to Scenario 2 which contemplates acquiring federal land that is currently managed as open space. The obvious assumption is that the open space would be converted, resulting in less net open space to look at and a higher premium on private lands in terms of open space acquisition. Considering a public lands act and Scenario 3, which contemplates greatly expanding private land in Eagle Valley, there will be much less open space placing even a greater stress on private lands. Mr. Nowlin commented that all three scenarios will have an infill aspect where the cost of private lands that are currently open will increase per square foot. He anticipates "tremendous challenges in all three scenarios for the Open Space Committee and tremendous challenges for the citizens of Eagle Valley to try and retain open space for quality of life." He expressed support for the Committee becoming involved in the process early.

Mr. Plemel clarified that there are aspects of Scenario 2 which don't necessarily include development of BLM property. He invited the citizens to become involved in the process, and provided the website address and the Planning and Community Development and Parks and Recreation Department telephone numbers. Mr. Plemel acknowledged that contact information is available on the website for the public to provide comments and input directly to City staff. Vice Chairperson Jacquet thanked Mr. Plemel and Mr. Krahn.

**3-D. DISCUSSION ONLY REGARDING STATUS OF THE HORSE CREEK RANCH TRANSACTION (1-1824)** - Mr. Guzman reviewed the staff report, and advised that the lot line adjustment has been initiated by Resource Concepts, Inc. He anticipates it will be completed within 2-3 weeks and will close the purchase portion of the deal. In response to a question, Mr. Guzman advised that a good deal of publicity is associated with accomplished acquisitions.

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**3-E. DISCUSSION ONLY REGARDING STATUS OF QUESTION 1, ROUND 2, NOMINATIONS (1-1865)** - Mr. Guzman reviewed the staff report, and advised of having presented the property features to a Question 1 technical committee. The presentation was well received. Members of the technical committee requested Mr. Guzman to focus more on drainage work for future projects, and to consider whether properties adjacent to the urban interface could be considered as urban parks, which are more easily funded.

**3-F. DISCUSSION ONLY REGARDING THE STATUS OF THE CINDERLITE TRANSACTION (1-1924)** - Mr. Guzman reviewed the staff report, and advised that Jeff Wass was the high bidder. He acknowledged that Mr. Wass' company will be required to obtain a special use permit.

**3-G. DISCUSSION ONLY REGARDING THE STATUS OF THE WATERFALL FIRE TIMBER SALVAGE OPERATIONS (1-1955)** - Mr. Guzman reviewed the staff report, and anticipates having the contract signed by Wednesday, March 9<sup>th</sup>. In response to a question, Mr. Guzman advised that there have been no environmental issues identified with regard to timber salvage on Carson City lands. In response to a further question, Mr. Guzman advised that the drill seeding operation continued approximately a week ago. The project is approximately 45% complete. The Nevada Department of Wildlife recently completed its aerial seeding operation. In response to a question, Mr. Guzman anticipates that the helicopter portion of the timber salvage operation will begin approximately two weeks after the contract is signed. Property owners and area residents will be notified and notices posted along the routes. In response to a further question, Mr. Guzman advised that Carson City contributed approximately \$4,000 toward the NDOW aerial seeding operation.

**4. NON-ACTION ITEMS:**

**STATUS REPORTS AND COMMENTS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS (1-2030)** - Member Perock advised of having spent a few hours with Mr. Guzman as part of an orientation. He commented on the importance of new committee member orientation, and expressed appreciation for Mr. Guzman's time.

**STATUS REPORTS AND COMMENTS FROM STAFF (1-2043)** - Mr. Guzman reviewed the "FYI" items included in the agenda materials. (1-2081) Mr. Guzman explained the purpose of the Resolution, included in the agenda materials, clarifying a past action of the Board of Supervisors declaring Kings Canyon Road as a public road. Member Scott suggested ensuring that the Parks and Recreation Department has considered Kings Canyon Road as part of the trails plan.

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS (1-2114)** - Mr. Guzman reviewed future agenda items. Member Fischer suggested that this Committee's input to the master plan should be agendized for the next meeting. Discussion took place with regard to the same.

(1-2165) Mr. Nowlin encouraged the Committee to begin providing input to the master plan. He suggested that this Committee should have had input to the public survey questions, as well. Vice Chairperson Jacquet advised that a working group of this Committee reviewed the public survey.

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- 5. ACTION ON ADJOURNMENT** (1-2192) - Member Fischer moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 p.m. Member Scott seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

The Minutes of the March 7, 2005 meeting of the Carson City Open Space Advisory Committee are so approved this 18<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2005.

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STEPHEN D. HARTMAN, Chair