

**MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION (“CWC”) STAKEHOLDERS COUNCIL MILLCREEK CANYON COMMITTEE MEETING ON MONDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2023, AT 1:30 P.M. THE MEETING WAS CONDUCTED BOTH IN-PERSON AND VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM. THE ANCHOR LOCATION WAS THE CWC OFFICES LOCATED AT GATEWAY AT 41 NORTH RIO GRANDE STREET, SUITE 102, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH.**

**Present:** Tom Diegel, Chair

 Del Draper

 Maura Hahnenberger

 Ed Marshall

 Rusty Vetter

 Mike Christensen

 Patrick Shea

**Staff:**  Lindsey Nielsen, Executive Director

 Samantha Kilpack, Director of Operations

**Opening**

1. **Chair Tom Diegel will Open the Public Meeting as Chair of the Millcreek Canyon Committee of the Central Wasatch Commission Stakeholders Council.**

Chair Tom Diegel called the Millcreek Canyon Committee Meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

1. **Review and Approval of the Minutes from the September 18, 2023 Meeting.**

**MOTION:** Ed Marshall moved to APPROVE the September 18, 2023, Millcreek Canyon Committee Minutes. Del Draper seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Available Canyon Land Parcel Discussion**

1. **Committee Members will Discuss Available Land Parcels in Millcreek Canyon.**

Chair Diegel reported that John Knoblock knows the most about the available land parcels in Millcreek Canyon but was unable to attend the Millcreek Canyon Committee Meeting. There was still a lot of uncertainty about whether there was water associated with the land. It seemed that Salt Lake City was not sure and neither was Boundary Springs. Del Draper noted that Mr. Knoblock sent out a separate email related to the fee booth. In that email, he indicated that the fee booth is in the area where the available land parcels are located. Mr. Draper was not sure how a purchase of the property would impact the fee booth area. Chair Diegel pointed out that there was a desire to bring the trail down that way as well, which meant it would potentially cross the available land. There were a lot of unknowns associated with the available land parcels.

Chair Diegel intended to reach out to Wendy Fisher from Utah Open Lands. Ms. Fisher expressed interest in the project and had a lot of useful knowledge. He offered to follow up with her later in the week to see what she had to say about the available land parcels in Millcreek Canyon. Additionally, he would reach out to Mr. Knoblock about any potential updates.

Ed Marshall reported that at the last Millcreek Canyon Committee Meeting, it was determined that information about the available land parcels would be presented to the CWC Board. He wondered if it had been presented and what the reaction was. Executive Director, Lindsey Nielsen, reported that the Executive Directors Report was cut from the agenda at the last CWC Board Meeting, as requested by the Chair, due to time limitations. As a result, she did not share that informational update during the CWC Board Meeting. Chair Diegel reported that information was shared at the recent Stakeholders Council Meeting. There had been some acknowledgment that the available land parcels could result in potential issues. The matter had not been discussed by the CWC Board, but it had been discussed at a Stakeholders Council level.

Mr. Draper suggested speaking to Mr. Knoblock following the Millcreek Canyon Committee Meeting. The next time Stakeholders Council leadership presents to the CWC Board, it would be ideal for the Millcreek Canyon land parcels to be included as an informational item.

**FLAP Grant Update and Discussion**

1. **Committee Members will Discuss the Ongoing FLAP Grant and Potential Parking Solutions for a Shuttle.**
2. **Chair Diegel will Discuss His Recent Comments to the County Council.**

The Millcreek Canyon Committee discussed the ongoing Federal Lands Access Program (“FLAP”) grant work. Chair Diegel noted that at the last Millcreek Canyon Committee Meeting, he mentioned that there would be a County Council Meeting shortly. He took it upon himself to attend the meeting and share comments. He spoke for a few minutes and shared a summary of the project. He also expressed concerns with the Millcreek Canyon Committee. It was concerning that the project appeared to be moving ahead in ways that did not reflect what the general public desires. Deputy Mayor, Catherine Kanter, stated that there had been some discussions about the FLAP grant. Council Member Bradley acknowledged that it was a complicated matter. It was determined that the FLAP grant would be discussed at a future meeting.

Chair Diegel was encouraged by what he heard during the County Council Meeting but pointed out that October and November are the months when the County budget is discussed. Based on a follow-up conversation with Deputy Mayor Kanter, it was not likely that the County Council would be able to discuss the FLAP grant until early December. That being said, Chair Diegel believed the County Council had appreciated receiving the update that had been shared.

Mr. Draper watched the meeting and heard the comments shared by Chair Diegel. His impression was that some of the Council Members lacked knowledge about the canyon issues. It was beneficial that Chair Diegel had taken the time to attend the meeting and present information.

Chair Diegel reported that he sent an email to Braden Peters recently. He explained that Mr. Peters is the Project Lead and works with the Federal Highway Administration (“FHWA”). The email exchanges so far have been unfulfilling. Chair Diegel had questions that he wanted answers to but they had not been received so far. He expressed frustration with the process. There had not been a recent response from Mr. Peters, so he was not sure what would happen in the future.

Mr. Draper wondered if comments had been received from Mayor Silvestrini about suggested parking locations for a Millcreek Canyon shuttle. Chair Diegel thanked Mr. Draper for doing research, counting the number of potential parking spaces, and reaching out to Skyline High School. He believed there had been a good start to the conversation. It would be possible to reach out to the U.S. Forest Service in the future with possible parking locations but he believed the parking locations needed to be confirmed with Mayor Silvestrini first. Chair Diegel believed it would be possible to add additional parking information to the Feasibility Proposal submitted by the CWC. Mr. Draper offered to reach out to Mayor Silvestrini for parking location confirmation.

Rusty Vetter reported that before he was a member of the Stakeholders Council, he attended several Millcreek Canyon Committee Meetings. During that time, he thought a lot about a potential Millcreek Canyon shuttle. He thought the shuttle was an excellent idea in the past, especially during the drafting of the Mountain Accord process but had since cooled on the idea of a canyon shuttle. Mr. Vetter had concerns about logistics in addition to parking. When people start to find out what the shuttle may or may not be, it will likely become more complicated. While he would love to see a shuttle, he believed there were a lot of details to be finalized. He still had concerns about feasibility and how realistic a shuttle would be in terms of resources.

Mr. Draper believed the intention was to discuss the shuttle before the FLAP grant work was done so certain considerations could be made. For instance, pull-offs being wide enough for a shuttle and there being turnaround spots. Thinking about these things beforehand meant it would be possible to design the road in a way that could accommodate a future shuttle service. Incorporating shuttle planning into the redevelopment of the road was important. Mr. Draper understood that there were a lot of issues to iron out but the basic idea was to include shuttle work in the FLAP grant planning as it moved forward. Mr. Vetter reported that at the last public meeting related to the FLAP grant, it seemed there was a desire to accommodate pullouts and shuttle locations. He was under the impression that planning was being done for shuttle stops at Elbow Fork, Alexander Basin, and the top of the canyon. Chair Diegel explained that the Feasibility Proposal acknowledged that infrastructure was being considered. As such, there was a desire for the Forest Service to move the National Environmental Policy Act (“NEPA”) forward for the consideration of a shuttle.

Ms. Nielsen reported that the infrastructure construction associated with the FLAP grant had an end goal of providing transit via a shuttle in the canyon. She acknowledged that there were a lot of shuttle-related details to consider. In the CWC submitted research to the Forest Service, it stated that dogs would be allowed on the shuttle to allow for various uses of the canyon. However, dogs on the shuttle would need to be outfitted in a well-fitted muzzle. She explained that the suggestion was based on other models in place around the country.

Chair Diegel believed the Forest Service had expressed support for the idea of a shuttle but was under-resourced. As a result, it had been determined that the Forest Service would consider information submitted by the CWC. He felt it was encouraging that the Forest Service had expressed interest in a shuttle but also that the Forest Service expressed a willingness to work with the CWC. The latter was something the Forest Service had been reluctant to do in the past. Chair Diegel reiterated that this was an encouraging shift and represented positive change.

Patrick Shea wondered if anyone had asked the Forest Service if there was a willingness to contract out to a private party for some of the studies necessary for a canyon shuttle. Chair Diegel understood that someone else would do the study and it was a matter of having the financial resources to do so. Ms. Nielsen confirmed that the Forest Service does not have the funds to contract for the NEPA analysis or the capital funds necessary to get a shuttle program off the ground. The Forest Service approached the CWC and asked the CWC to conduct some research related to the feasibility. If the research was encouraging enough for the Forest Service, then the Forest Service would have asked the CWC to fund a third party to conduct the NEPA analysis.

Chair Diegel informed those present that Mr. Draper would reach out to Mayor Silvestrini about potential parking locations. At the next Millcreek Canyon Committee Meeting, it would be possible for Committee Members to strategize and think about how to present the information to the Forest Service for consideration. He explained that the work would continue to move ahead.

**Camp Tracy Update and Discussion**

1. **Committee Members will Discuss Updates to Camp Tracy.**

Mr. Draper shared information about Camp Tracy and reported that he submitted a letter to the Boy Scouts. In 2015, the Great Salt Lake Council sold an 18-acre parcel to a private individual. He shared that recently discovered information with the Boy Scouts and expressed a desire for there to be a Conservation Easement on Camp Tracy. It would still be possible for the Boy Scouts to continue to run the camp. The intention was to prevent the land from being developed in the future. Comments on the draft letter were received from Mr. Marshall and Chair Diegel and those were incorporated into the letter that was submitted. Shortly after the letter was sent, he received a call for Jeremy Bell from the Crossroads of the West Council and was told that there was no interest in a Conservation Easement. There was a lot of pushback from the Boy Scouts about the idea. He believed the organization knew that if there was ever a desire to look into a Conservation Easement, it would be possible to reach out to the CWC for further discussion. Currently, the Boy Scouts were unwilling to move forward.

Mr. Shea wondered if the Steiner Family had any residual interest in Camp Steiner. Mr. Draper had not been able to determine whether the Steiners were in the chain of title or retained any individual interest. When he went to the County Recorder’s Office, he was unable to find them anywhere in the chain of title, but it was still possible that there was some residual interest.

Mr. Marshall looked into the history of Camp Tracy. It was granted to the Boy Scouts by a deed in 1918 or 1919 by Alvin Taylor, who was the sole remaining trustee of the Salt Lake City Southern Railway Company. He had been allowing it to be used by the Boy Scouts and the YMCA and it was previously called Russell Taylor Flats. It was deeded to the Boy Scouts in 1919, but there was no reference to the Steiners. In 1923, Russel Taylor, who was a local banker and philanthropist, donated $10,000 to create a lodge there, which was called the Tracy Wigwam at Camp Taylor. Ultimately, the name became Camp Tracy. That was all the legal history he had been able to find.

**Fire Prevention Discussion**

1. **Committee Members will Discuss and Vote on Encouraging the Forest Service to Use Funding to Clean Up Debris Along Millcreek Road.**

Mr. Marshall reported that there was a desire for the Forest Service to clean up the debris that had been accumulating for decades along Millcreek Road. It was more dangerous than the rest of the forest because that debris serves as tinder. It ignites more easily, burns hotter, and spreads faster. Bekee Hotze responded to his request with a number of reasons why the Forest Service would not clean the debris. She stated that there was not enough staff or money to do so. However, in the last few years, the Forest Service received funding for fire prevention and had made an effort in other areas, which included upper Millcreek Canyon. Mr. Marshall reported that Scott Frost was currently filling in for Ms. Hotze and he reached out to him. Mr. Frost was encouraging on the call and saw the clean-up along the road as something that was possible. It would involve removing debris 10 feet in width on each side of the road, without piling and burning. Mr. Frost agreed to look into the matter further. Mr. Marshall sent the Forest Service a copy of the Road Easement that the Forest Service granted to the County. It allowed road maintenance to occur on each side of the road. He reiterated that Mr. Frost was looking into this.

Mr. Marshall asked that a motion be made by the Millcreek Canyon Committee to indicate that there was support for the Forest Service to clean the debris along Millcreek Road. If the matter needed to go further, such as a letter and possible motion at the Stakeholders Council level and then a letter from the CWC to the Forest Service, that could be prepared in the next month or so. He stated that in that instance, the letter would be presented to the Millcreek Canyon Committee before it went to the Stakeholders Council for consideration and a recommendation.

Chair Diegel thought this was an important issue and thanked Mr. Marshall for bringing it to the Committee. It was time that more aggressive fire suppression measures were taken in the canyon. He appreciated that Mr. Marshall had taken the lead on this and had reached out to Mr. Frost.

**MOTION:** Ed Marshall moved that the Millcreek Canyon Committee issue SUPPORT for fire prevention in Millcreek Canyon by expressing its support for his request that the Forest Service remove the debris from a strip along both sides of Millcreek Road, in both the upper and lower canyon. Del Draper seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.

**Other Items**

Mr. Draper noted that there had been some email discussions about whether to hold the Millcreek Canyon Committee Meetings monthly or every other month. It was determined that monthly was ideal. He wondered if the next meeting should be set earlier to account for Chair Diegel, who was currently traveling. Chair Diegel clarified that the regular meeting time was suitable.

Ms. Nielsen reminded those present that the Millcreek Canyon Committee Meetings are anchored in person at the CWC offices. Anyone who wants to join in person could do so as there is always at least one member of CWC Staff present in person for Committee Meetings. In terms of the meeting schedule, consistency is what matters most. The next Millcreek Canyon Committee Meeting was scheduled to take place on Monday, November 20, 2023, at 1:30 p.m.

**Closing**

1. **Chair Tom Diegel will Call for a Motion to Adjourn the Millcreek Canyon Committee Meeting.**

**MOTION:** Del Draper moved to ADJOURN. Maura Hahnenberger seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.

The Millcreek Canyon Committee Meeting adjourned at approximately 2:20 p.m.

***I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the Stakeholders Council Millcreek Canyon Committee Meeting held Monday, October 16, 2023.***

Teri Forbes

Teri Forbes

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Minutes Secretary

Minutes Approved: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_