



9
10 **MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION (“CWC”) STAKEHOLDERS**
11 **COUNCIL MILLCREEK CANYON COMMITTEE MEETING ON TUESDAY,**
12 **FEBRUARY 20, 2024, AT 1:30 P.M. THE MEETING WAS CONDUCTED BOTH IN-**
13 **PERSON AND VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM. THE ANCHOR LOCATION WAS THE CWC**
14 **OFFICES LOCATED AT THE GATEWAY AT 41 NORTH RIO GRANDE STREET,**
15 **SUITE 102, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH.**

16
17 **Present:** Del Draper, Chair
18 Tom Diegel, Co-Chair
19 Bri Sullivan
20 Ed Marshall
21 Adam Lenkowski
22 Maura Hahnenberger
23

24 **Staff:** Lindsey Nielsen, Executive Director
25 Samantha Kilpack, Director of Operations
26

27 **Other:** Rusty Vetter
28

29 **Opening**
30

31 **1. Chair Del Draper will Open the Public Meeting as Chair of the Millcreek Canyon**
32 **Committee of the Central Wasatch Commission Stakeholders Council.**
33

34 Chair Del Draper called the Millcreek Canyon Committee Meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.
35

36 **2. Review and Approval of the Minutes from the January 16, 2024, Meeting.**
37

38 Ed Marshall referenced the sentence on Page 6 Line 12, and noted that there is a small correction
39 he would like to make. He asked that “at the winter gate” be replaced by “up to the winter gate.”
40

41 **MOTION:** Ed Marshall moved to APPROVE the Minutes from January 16, 2024, as amended.
42 There was no second. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.
43

1 **Committee Membership Updates and Introductions**

2 **3. Chair Draper will Introduce New Committee Leadership and Members.**

3 Chair Draper reported that there are three new Committee Members: Bri Sullivan, Adam
4 Lenkowski, and Dan Zalles. He asked the new members present to introduce themselves to the
5 Committee. Ms. Sullivan explained that she is one of the Co-Executive Directors of Women of
6 the Wasatch, which is a primarily trail-based running group in the Wasatch area. She is often in
7 the canyon recreating and looks forward to participating on the Millcreek Canyon Committee.
8

9 **FLAP Grant Comments Summary**

10 **1. Committee Members will Review a Recently Released Summary of Comments
11 Received During the June 2023 Open House for the Millcreek Canyon FLAP grant.**

12 Chair Draper shared information about the Federal Lands Access Program (“FLAP”) grant
13 comments that were submitted during the June 2023 open house. He explained that the summary
14 document related to those open house comments was not released until the end of January 2024.
15

16 Co-Chair Tom Diegel reminded Committee Members that last June, there was a presentation made
17 by the consultants on the FLAP grant project for Millcreek Canyon. One open house was held in
18 person and the other was done via Facebook Live. There was a public comment period that ended
19 early in July 2023. In the fall, he requested the raw data, and a 50-page document with comments
20 was sent to him. It was difficult at times to determine where one comment ended and another
21 began. As he read through the comments, he saw common concerns and created a spreadsheet to
22 track the types of comments received. There were many comments in opposition to widening the
23 lanes and straightening the turns. Others were concerned about stream health.
24

25 During the presentation last summer, there were references to an uphill bicycle lane, but the
26 consultants wanted that to end at Elbow Fork. This was justified with a statement that most people
27 only bicycle to Elbow Fork. Co-Chair Diegel reported that a lot of comments were received about
28 the bicycle lane. In connection to wider lanes and a straighter road, concerns were expressed about
29 higher speeds and maintaining the aesthetic of the canyon. He was surprised to see a lot of
30 comments in opposition of the parking plan. The idea is to eliminate roadside parking and instead
31 have more formalized parking locations in order to increase safety and protect the riparian.
32 Approximately a quarter of the comments received stated that there was no support for the parking
33 proposed. The fear was that the additional parking will encourage visitors to use personal vehicles.
34

35 Co-Chair Diegel reported that in January 2024, the summary document was released. The
36 response indicated that there was appreciation for the comments submitted. He was disappointed
37 in the way the analysis of the comment was released. In addition, he was frustrated that throughout
38 the process, there appeared to be an unwillingness to truly consider other options and alternatives.
39

40 Chair Draper asked if it was the consultants or the County that failed to make the responses well
41 known to the public. Co-Chair Diegel was not certain. He noted that there was a meeting with
42 the consultants approximately a year and a half ago. At that time, there was a willingness to
43

1 engage, but a lot depended on the individual, as everyone had a different role. Historically, he has
2 been frustrated with Helen Peters, who is the point person for this project at the County level. It
3 has been difficult in the past to receive information from her. That being said, in the last few days,
4 she has been responsive, which he appreciates. The project lead is Braden Peters, who works for
5 the Federal Highway Administration (“FHWA”). His written communication became more terse
6 over time, and eventually, he stopped responding to both emails and voicemail messages. Co-
7 Chair Diegel stressed the importance of additional transparency in the FLAP grant process.
8

9 Mr. Lenkowski asked about the total number of comments received. Co-Chair Diegel was not
10 certain but believed a few hundred comments were received. Chair Draper reported that in the
11 summary document, it stated that there were 196 comments related to the June 2023 open house.
12

13 Co-Chair Diegel reported that he sent a document to Committee Members earlier that day. It was
14 sent to him by Ms. Peters who received it from the consultants. The document listed all the traffic
15 incidents from 2016 to 2021. There were 140 incidents total and 10 of those were above the gate.
16 Mr. Marshall stated that he has been following the information for many years and has never seen
17 a number that high. He suspected that incidents by the high school might have been included in
18 that data. Rusty Vetter explained that based on his review of the data, above the gate, there were
19 never more than two serious incidents. In 2022, there were none. It is fair to ask questions about
20 how the information is informing the consultants and whether the data is accurate.
21

22 In previous discussions with the consultants, safety was one of the biggest rationales for the
23 improvement project. If the statistics supported the need to increase safety, Co-Chair Diegel would
24 be supportive. However, based on the statistics, there does not seem to be enough of a justification.
25

26 Mr. Marshall referenced the Fehr & Peers study that was conducted in 2012, which reported only
27 one accident above the winter gate. He noted that there is no communication above the winter
28 gate, which means some of the accidents there may be attributed to lower portions of the canyon.
29

30 Chair Draper had come across some safety statistics and those were included in the comment he
31 submitted previously. It is fair to state that there aren’t a lot of statistics to support incidents above
32 the gate, but it sounds like there is enough information between Mr. Marshall and Mr. Vetter that
33 it would be worthwhile to put together a comprehensive response to some of the safety claims.
34

35 Mr. Marshall discussed the summary document. Something he noticed was that a number of the
36 items were listed as non-moving traffic violations. He assumed a non-moving traffic violation is
37 a parking ticket. Chair Draper asked whether it is possible for Mr. Marshall to look at the safety
38 statistics released by the County and draft a response. Mr. Marshall offered to take a look at the
39 information because what was listed in the summary document was very surprising to him. Chair
40 Draper offered to send the information he has collected and noted that Mr. Vetter can do the same.
41

1 **Salt Lake County Commission Meeting Preparation**
2

3 **1. Committee Members will Plan and Prepare for the Upcoming Salt Lake County**
4 **Council Meeting.**
5

6 Chair Draper reported that the Salt Lake County Council Meeting is scheduled to take place on
7 February 27, 2024. Co-Chair Diegel explained that it is tentatively scheduled for 4:00 p.m. Ms.
8 Peters had informed him that he will have 15 minutes, which includes a question and answer
9 session. According to Ms. Peters, the U.S. Forest Service will be at the meeting. Co-Chair Diegel
10 reiterated that he will have 15 minutes and then there will be time for the consultants and the Forest
11 Service to speak. It was anticipated that the total discussion will last for an hour and a half. Co-
12 Chair Diegel noted that there needs to be a conversation about whether he will be speaking on
13 behalf of the Millcreek Canyon Committee or as an individual. He asked CWC Staff about that.
14

15 Executive Director, Lindsey Nielsen, explained that stakeholders are technically not spokespeople
16 for the Stakeholders Council or the CWC. As a result, it is best for Co-Chair Diegel to speak as
17 an individual, but it is appropriate to explain that he is on the CWC Stakeholders Council and is
18 the Co-Chair of the Millcreek Canyon Committee. Ms. Nielsen discussed the organizational
19 structure of the CWC. Anything coming from the subcommittees has to be approved by the
20 Stakeholders Council and the CWC Board. Co-Chair Diegel can state that he is on the committee,
21 but cannot state that he is sharing comments on behalf of the committee or the CWC itself.
22

23 Co-Chair Diegel explained that he will create an outline with the comments he wants to share at
24 the Salt Lake County Council Meeting. He offered to share the outline with Committee Members
25 in order to receive suggestions or feedback. Chair Draper noted that the meetings normally allow
26 citizen comments to be shared. Co-Chair Diegel explained that he initially made his comment
27 during a meeting in September 2023. Chair Diegel pointed out that additional comments could be
28 shared during that portion of the meeting by Committee Members, which there was support for.
29

30 Mr. Marshall clarified that the original justification for the FLAP grant was not safety, but that the
31 road was crumbling. There were places on the side with holes and it was determined that the base
32 itself needed to be repaired. The County and Forest Service were pleased to find a source of funds
33 that would redo the road. Co-Chair Diegel confirmed that the road repairs were a significant part
34 of the project and the original intention was to address that issue. That being said, a secondary
35 justification now seems to be increased safety in the canyon. Mr. Vetter referenced the website
36 for the FLAP grant project. It includes the original submission from the County. That original
37 submission is very different from what is currently being discussed. Mr. Lenkowski asked about
38 the accident list and wondered whether it is possible to determine whether any of those incidents
39 involved pedestrians. Co-Chair Diegel noted that one of them was listed as a pedestrian hit-and-
40 run incident. One of the safety concerns relates to interactions between vehicles and pedestrians.
41

42 Chair Draper asked Co-Chair Diegel to send his comment outline to Committee Members ahead
43 of the Salt Lake County Council Meeting on February 27, 2024. Suggestions can be shared to
44 make sure the outline is as robust as possible. Co-Chair Diegel thought it would be beneficial to
45 send a notice out to members of the Stakeholders Council so everyone was aware of the meeting
46 date. It was determined that he would send an email with the meeting information and explain that

1 he will be sharing comments as an individual based on his experience with the Stakeholders
2 Council and Millcreek Canyon Committee. Director of Operations, Samantha Kilpack, offered to
3 provide the email addresses of the newer Council Members to ensure that everyone was contacted.
4

5 Mr. Marshall clarified that though the Meeting Agenda referenced the Salt Lake County
6 Commission, it is the Salt Lake County Council. Chair Draper thanked him for the correction.
7

8 Co-Chair Diegel suggested that Committee Members discuss the desired outcome of the FLAP
9 grant. Chair Draper believed there will be different responses from different people. For instance,
10 some want to see the upper portion of the road fixed while others do not. There are a lot of concerns
11 about widening, because many people are concerned that this will change the character of the
12 canyon. On the other hand, there is support for a bicycle lane and improved safety in the canyon.
13 There will likely be a mixture of comments and a variety of desired outcomes based on the speaker.
14

15 Mr. Marshall pointed out that some of the goals are inconsistent with others. There seems to be
16 agreement that it is important to preserve the character of the upper portion of the canyon, but a
17 bicycle path is inconsistent with the desire not to widen the road. As long as the middle stripe is
18 maintained, then not widening the road is inconsistent with having a bicycle lane. There might be
19 a question about which is valued more. Chair Draper shared comments about the Salt Lake County
20 Council Meeting. If one of the Council Members asks what Co-Chair Diegel wants to see, it will
21 be possible to discuss the comments received. The vast majority of the submitted comments did
22 not want to see the character of the canyon changed. Since the FHWA has not been responsive to
23 those concerns and is not very transparent, it may be worthwhile for the Council to look at that.
24

25 Mr. Vetter noted that the Salt Lake County Council can influence the administration to engage
26 with all of the interested parties for better management of the canyon. There seems to be an
27 unwillingness from the County to be part of the process. Co-Chair Diegel expressed frustration
28 that the Forest Service and the County seem to have handed the FLAP grant work off to the
29 consultants, but the consultants have not been very transparent. It is important to convince both
30 the County and Forest Service to have more accountability on this project. Mr. Lenkowski
31 believed the road needed to be widened in order to accommodate a future shuttle program. Co-
32 Chair Diegel reported that infrastructure to account for a shuttle will be built into the project.
33

34 The Wasatch Backcountry Alliance has run a shuttle up Big Cottonwood Canyon and Little
35 Cottonwood Canyon for the last few years. Co-Chair Diegel explained that the shuttle service has
36 been successful, but it was despite the efforts of the Forest Service. The Forest Service will not
37 allow the shuttle bus to stop anywhere except for the ski resorts. He noted that the Forest Service
38 is very focused on rules, regulations, and limits. It seems that there should be some middle ground.
39

40 Mr. Marshall commented that the road width needed to accommodate a shuttle is an important
41 unanswered question. Previously, John Knoblock said it needs to have two 10-foot lanes for a
42 total of 20 feet, but that is based on a State Statute and not what the Forest Service believes.
43

1 **Millcreek Shuttle Update**

2

3 **1. Committee Members will Hear an Update on the Proposed NEPA for a Millcreek**

4 **Canyon Shuttle.**

5

6 Ms. Nielsen reported that she met with Bekee Hotze at the Forest Service recently. She was
7 unimpressed with the parking options that the Millcreek Canyon Committee found. Ms. Hotze
8 also questioned the validity of the map that one of the Committee Members delivered. It showed
9 two areas potentially available for parking, but Ms. Hotze remains unconvinced. Ms. Nielsen
10 explained that she will do more due diligence this week specifically related to those parking areas.
11 It might be possible to speak to Ms. Hotze again once she has more information and permissions.

12

13 The CWC has some money left over in the Mountain Transportation System (“MTS”) line item of
14 the budget. Ms. Nielsen reported that the budget year ends in June. She believes the National
15 Environmental Policy Act (“NEPA”) work might be a good place to spend that money. It was
16 noted that she reached out to Fehr & Peers recently. Ms. Nielsen explained that the Forest Service
17 is concerned about performing the NEPA before some of the details are finalized. Ms. Nielsen
18 would personally like to see the NEPA process move forward before the end of the fiscal year.

19

20 Mr. Vetter stated that he had to leave the meeting shortly and asked to share some final comments.
21 He reported that Salt Lake City has been aggressive over the years when it comes to purchasing
22 properties in the watershed. There have been broader discussions recently within the CWC about
23 creating a list of the vacant parcels in the canyons. Ms. Nielsen explained that the development of
24 a program under the CWC umbrella to procure land from willing sellers for conservation was
25 outlined as an action item in the Mountain Accord. That is where those discussions came from.
26 The matter was discussed during the CWC Board Retreat and Mayor Erin Mendenhall thought
27 these efforts would be better to remain under the direction of their respective jurisdictions.

28

29 Additional discussions were had about the parking for a potential shuttle. Chair Draper explained
30 that there needs to be documentation obtained from the Utah Department of Transportation
31 (“UDOT”) and Millcreek City for the parking lots. That work is currently in process. As for the
32 reaction Ms. Hotze had to the maps provided, he offered to meet with Ms. Nielsen to discuss that
33 further. It is possible to provide better maps and additional information to the Forest Service. Co-
34 Chair Diegel suggested that Ms. Hotze actually visit the potential parking locations in person.

35

36 Ms. Nielsen clarified that Ms. Hotze indicated she and her team went out to look at the area. One
37 issue for her had to do with the lot along Virginia Way. She was concerned that the students at
38 Skyline High School would be using the lot. Essentially, she was concerned that the lot existed
39 for a reason and that might impact the shuttle being able to utilize the lot in the future. Chair
40 Draper reported that Skyline High School is going through a rebuild and there will be additional
41 parking lots constructed over the next few years. Those parking lots will reduce the demand for
42 the Virginia Way parking. Even if students still park there on school days, the shuttle is primarily
43 being considered during the summer months and on weekends. It is possible to co-exist with any
44 parking that is related to the school use. Ms. Nielsen stated that the next time she speaks to Ms.
45 Hotze about this issue, she will have the exact number of parking spots outlined in a report.
46 Additionally, she wants to have written consent from the land owners, UDOT, and Millcreek City.

1
2 Mr. Marshall explained that in order to determine the exact number of parking spaces, CWC Staff
3 will need to know whether the jurisdiction allows angled parking or parallel parking. It is possible
4 to create a lot more parking spaces if the spaces are angled, but not all jurisdictions allow that. He
5 suggested that someone reach out to Millcreek City and UDOT to see what is allowed in the lots.
6

7 **Other Updates**
8

9 **1. Committee Members May Hear Updates on the Land Parcel for Sale in Millcreek**
10 **Canyon, Fire Hazard Reduction Efforts, Cell Service in the Canyon, and Other Items.**

11
12 Chair Draper asked for an update on the reduction of fire materials on the side of the road. Mr.
13 Marshall reported that after the last Millcreek Canyon Committee Meeting, he received a text
14 message from Scott Frost at the Forest Service. Mr. Frost stated that he is planning to have that
15 work done when the snow melts in the springtime, before the grass grows. He believed the work
16 will occur in late May or early June, depending on the snowpack. The work is being planned for.
17

18 Mr. Lenkowski referenced the earlier question about the FLAP grant work about what is actually
19 desired. On the CWC website, there was a copy of a letter sent in December 2021. There were
20 several bullet points listed in the letter. It is possible to look at the list and see if it still aligns with
21 the consensus of the Millcreek Canyon Committee. He offered to send that out to the Committee.
22

23 **Closing**
24

25 **2. Chair Draper will Call for a Motion to Adjourn the Millcreek Canyon Committee**
26 **Meeting.**

27
28 **MOTION:** Tom Diegel moved to ADJOURN the Millcreek Canyon Committee Meeting. Ed
29 Marshall seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.
30

31 The Millcreek Canyon Committee Meeting adjourned at approximately 2:37 p.m.

1 *I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the*
2 *Stakeholders Council Millcreek Canyon Committee Meeting held on Tuesday, February 20, 2024.*

3
4 Teri Forbes

5 Teri Forbes
6 T Forbes Group
7 Minutes Secretary
8
9 Minutes Approved: _____