

**MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION STAKEHOLDERS COUNCIL MILLCREEK CANYON COMMITTEE MEETING HELD MONDAY, JUNE 21, 2021, AT 1:00 P.M. THE MEETING WAS CONDUCTED ELECTRONICALLY VIA ZOOM.**

**Present:**

**Committee Members:** Chair Paul Diegel, John Knoblock, Tom Diegel, Ed Marshall, Del Draper

**Others:** Polly Hart, Rita Lund, Hilary Jacobs, Ryan Stone, Helen Peters, Lance Kovel, Crystal Holbert, WWick, Bruce Woolstenhulme, Mike Jenkins, Mike Mikhalev, Beckee Hotze

**Staff:** CWC Executive Director Ralph Becker, CWC Deputy Director Blake Perez, CWC Communications Director Lindsey Nielsen, Office Administrator Kaye Mickelson

Chair Paul Diegel called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. He welcomed those present to the Millcreek Canyon Committee Meeting.

The Legislature, pursuant to Section 52-4-207(4), required the Committee to make a determination, which was as follows:

‘This meeting will occur only electronically, without a physical location, as authorized by Utah Code Ann. 52-4-207(4). The Chair of the Millcreek Canyon Committee has determined that this meeting will be held electronically without an anchor location, given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, which the Chair has determined to present a substantial risk to the health and safety of those who may be present at an anchor location.’

1. **Review and Approval of the Minutes from the February 16, March 15, and May 17, 2021, Meetings.**

The February 16, 2021, Meeting Minutes and March 15, 2021, Meeting Minutes were reviewed. Ed Marshall noted that John Knoblock and Tom Diegel needed to be moved from the Others category to the Committee Members category in the February 16, 2021, Meeting Minutes.

**MOTION:** Del Draper moved to approve the minutes from the February 16, 2021, Millcreek Canyon Committee Meeting, as amended. Ed Marshall seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.

**MOTION:** Del Draper moved to approve the minutes from the March 15, 2021, Millcreek Canyon Committee Meeting. John Knoblock seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.

The May 17, 2021, Meeting Minutes were reviewed. Chair Diegel shared highlighted corrections, which included the addition of a comment related to traffic roundabouts. At the meeting, he stated that the number of accidents increased but the number of injuries and fatalities decreased. Chair Diegel also shared a highlighted addition to the section where Forest Service Special Projects Coordinator, Lance Kovel discussed categorical exclusions. Del Draper noted that the blank space included in the Others section likely referred to Crystal Holbert from the County Engineer’s Office. Mr. Marshall commented that the May 17, 2021, meeting adjourned at 2:17 p.m.

**MOTION:** Del Draper moved to approve the minutes from the May 17, 2021, Millcreek Canyon Committee Meeting, as amended. Ed Marshall seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.

1. **FLAP Grant: Status Update and Outline of Next Steps (The FLAP Grant Partners - U.S. Forest Service, Millcreek, and Salt Lake County).**

Helen Peters shared an update related to the Federal Lands Access Program (“FLAP”) grant. Ms. Peters reported that FLAP improved transportation facilities by providing access to or within Federal lands. The Millcreek project scope had been expanded to include the area between Big Water Trailhead and the Winter Gate for a total of 4.5 miles. The Utah Programming Decisions Committee (“PDC”) felt the proposal should go to the Winter Gate and they were willing to split some of the costs. The total project value was $19.6 million. The new required local match, which included splitting the costs for the area between Elbow Fork and the Winter Gate, was $4.2 million. Ms. Peters noted that she would send FLAP grant information to Chair Diegel.

The Millcreek FLAP grant timeline was shared. Ms. Peters explained that they had received the notification from the Federal Highway Administration (“FHWA”). They were now working through details before moving forward with Salt Lake County and Millcreek. In August 2021, there would be a press conference and fundraising would begin. From August 2021 through October 2021, there would be community outreach presentations. In the first week of November, there would be an open house with FHWA that would start the 30-day public comment period.

In 2022, public comments would be considered and the preliminary design, environmental field surveys, and technical analysis would take place. In 2023, 95% of the design would be completed and in 2024, 100% of the design would be completed. Construction would end in the summer of 2026. Ms. Peters noted that this was the tentative timeline and may be subject to change.

Ms. Peters outlined the details related to the project scope. Big Water Trailhead to Elbow Fork was 3.1 miles and there would be a 20-foot-wide paved surface. Elbow Fork to Winter Gate would have a 29-foot-wide paved surface. Picnic areas would be improved, there would be work in the Thousand Springs area to realign the streambed channel and there could be roadway realignments. Additionally, there would be improved roadway drainage, possible improvements made to the Historic White Bridge, the installation of a two-inch diameter conduit, and an intelligent transportation system (“ITS”). Ms. Peters reported that there would also be roadway safety and pedestrian crossing measures, especially at the Elbow Fork Trailhead.

Rita Lund clarified that the $4.2 million local match mentioned earlier was the amount of money that would need to be raised. She discussed the relocation of the Millcreek fee booth and explained that Millcreek was trying to find funding for the fee booth relocation. The project would involve moving the fee booth further down the canyon so it was on County property. This would allow there to be two lanes coming out of the canyon so there were no longer backups at the fee booth. Ms. Peters added that the project could also include an upgrade to the nearby restroom.

Chair Diegel asked for additional information about the fee booth relocation. Ms. Lund explained that Millcreek City and the City Engineers would be responsible for the project. She noted that the fee booth could not be moved too far up the canyon or too far down the canyon and would need to stay in a similar location to avoid retaining walls and prevent the fee booth from being too close to the stream. The fee booth would be pushed a little bit further down the canyon with the goal to get as much as possible onto County property, do a bit of widening, and include a second lane for coming out of the canyon. She noted that it would look nicer and be more functional.

Discussions were had about fundraising. Ms. Peters reported that there was an immediate requirement of $115,000 as soon as the Fund Transfer Agreement was turned in. The rest of the money would be due on March 1, 2024. The FLAP grant still needed to go through the Salt Lake County process but things were moving forward. Mr. Diegel wondered whether there would be any sort of outreach to try to obtain the necessary funds. Ms. Peters confirmed this. She noted that there would be community fundraising. Additionally, grants would be written.

Mr. Diegel made note of the Bonanza Flat fundraising efforts. He felt that fundraising for the FLAP grant project would be just as popular. Mr. Diegel believed it was important to share information with the community about how much money needed to be raised. There could also be an outreach to different community organizations to help spread the word about fundraising. Ms. Peters agreed that all messaging would need to be shared and packaged appropriately. She added that there was also the possibility of a second FLAP grant application in the future. It would include the area from the Winter Gate to the beginning of the canyon. Mr. Knoblock noted that Catherine Kanter seemed confident that Salt Lake County could come up with the matched funds.

Mr. Draper wondered whether the original $12 million project would proceed if they were unable to obtain the $4.2 million match for the portion between Elbow Fork and the Winter Gate. Ms. Peters commented that they bundled together and there were some efficiencies to consider. They would do what they could to obtain the $4.2 million match. Mr. Draper appreciated the optimism of other Millcreek Canyon Committee Members but noted that it could be more challenging to raise money for a road. Ms. Peters reminded Committee Members that the FLAP grant project also included improved picnic and trailhead areas. Ms. Lund added that parking was an issue in the area and the project would solve some of those parking issues.

Chair Diegel noted that it was too early to start speculating or commenting on design details. He reported that there would be opportunities in the future to review, discuss and provide input. Mr. Marshall thanked Ms. Peters and Ms. Lund for the work they had put into the FLAP grant process. Chair Diegel seconded that and thanked all who had contributed to the project.

Mr. Knoblock asked about the location of the fee booth. Ms. Lund reported that it would need to be pushed forward to be either on County property or on the boundary of County property. She noted that there was a triangle-shaped parcel that the Mayor had been talking about with a group from the County. Mr. Knoblock wondered whether that was the Canyon Property Holdings, LLC parcel. Ms. Lund confirmed this. She offered to share any additional information she received.

1. **Other Business Added to the Agenda Relating Directly to Millcreek Canyon.**

Mr. Knoblock shared updates related to trails with the Millcreek Canyon Committee. He reported that he had done an equipment weed inspection with the Forest Service crew on a mini excavator. The contractor, Nature Trails, LLC, would be finishing the last 0.4 miles of trail on the south side of the road to connect down to Elbow Fork. That work would take approximately three weeks. Mr. Knoblock noted that there would be work from June 22, 2021, to June 25, 2021, on the section before the stream crossed under the road. There was a risk of rock falling down onto the road during that work. As a result, volunteers were needed to direct traffic and focus on safety.

Following that project, Nature Trails, LCC, would move down to Rattlesnake Trail and begin construction on a new lower grade trail. It would be parallel to Rattlesnake Trail but have a 9% grade. That would become part of the Bonneville Shoreline Trail in the future. There was approximately 1.4 miles of trail to build and there would be 16 switchbacks. As a result, the construction process would take more time. Mr. Knoblock believed it would progress through August and September 2021. Polly Hart suggested that Mr. Knoblock reach out to a cycling club or Trails Utah for volunteers. Mr. Knoblock thanked her for the suggestion.

Chair Diegel commented that he had recently ridden and run the stretch of trail above the Alexander Basin. He complimented Trails Utah and the Forest Service for designing that trail. He felt they had done a great job at keeping the trail fairly level and then putting in tight switchbacks to lose altitude without making the trail too fast. Chair Diegel wondered whether a resolution had been reached related to directional rules on that trail and Rattlesnake Trail. Mr. Knoblock explained that no decisions had been made yet on the upper trail from Elbow Fork to Big Water. Beckee Hotze, Marshall Alford, and Zinnia Wilson from the Forest Service would make the decision on whether to change the existing Closure Order so there would be odd/even days. He believed that decision would be made by fall. For the Rattlesnake Trail, there had been discussions about possibly making it one downhill and one uphill lane or pedestrian-only. The Forest Service had decided not to make any user group definitions currently.

Mr. Knoblock shared an update related to the bridge that was destroyed during the windstorm at Elbow Fork. The bridge replacement had been delayed because engineers at the district level had been unable to get to the project. As a result, the bridge had not been engineered and no materials had been ordered. The Forest Service believed the bridge would not be installed until next year. They may not open the new trail below Alexander Basin until that bridge has been replaced.

Mr. Marshall asked about the trails above Salt Lake City. He reported that Carl Fisher had sent out an email stating that a group had been formed called Save Our Foothills. They believed the construction was causing environmental issues. Mr. Knoblock reported that some people had provided input to the Salt Lake City Council and Mayor Erin Mendenhall. Those people were concerned that the trails were not being constructed properly and that construction would increase the use of the foothills too much. Mayor Mendenhall put a hold on new trail construction through to the end of September 2021 to get more public input about the issues.

Mr. Knoblock stated that a lot more people were out using trails and enjoying nature. He felt that was a positive thing. However, he noted that there were a few minor issues to consider. For instance, the piece of the Bonneville Shoreline Trail that came up from City Creek Canyon. That had been changed to be downhill bikes only. The new Bonneville Shoreline Trail section now started from the salt pile, which was about a half mile before the U-bend on the road. If someone did not know about that and they drove to the U-bend to hike up the Bonneville Shoreline Trail, they would be one-half mile too far on a one-way road. There needed to be better signage there. Additionally, he had suggested to the Salt Lake City Trail Planners that hiking-only trails would benefit from a slightly steeper grade. One of the trails they had finished had an 8% grade. He believed it could be built up to a 15% grade, which would be more satisfying for hikers.

Mr. Diegel reported that there was a RadioWest segment recently related to the foothills. It provided different perspectives and was available for Millcreek Canyon Committee Members to listen to. Mr. Marshall reported that from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. on June 23, 2021, there would be a Roundtable Discussion Stakeholder Panel with Ms. Hotze and others. The first hour would show the movie, “The West is Burning,” and the second hour would include the roundtable discussion. He offered to send the link to those interested in participating. It was noted that the Forest Service and Rocky Mountain Power had cut back branches in Millcreek Canyon to further the corridor along the roads. Chair Diegel thanked those that had attended the meeting.

1. **Adjournment.**

**MOTION:** John Knoblock moved to adjourn. Del Draper seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.

The Millcreek Canyon Committee Meeting adjourned at 1:51 p.m.

***I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the Central Wasatch Commission’s Stakeholders Council Millcreek Canyon Committee Meeting held Monday, June 21, 2021.***

Teri Forbes

Teri Forbes

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Minutes Secretary

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