

OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
October 13, 2016

Present: Eric Anderson, Rob Erickson, Alexis Gibson, Janet Krivacek, Bert Lindler,
Ethel MacDonald, Anna Noson, Kevin Verlanic, Regan Whitworth

Absent: Gerhard Knudsen, Daniel Spencer, Deke Tidwell,

Staff: Elizabeth Erickson, Paula Fisher, Libby Wawro – Legal intern

Guest: Sarah Richey (Five Valleys Land Trust)

Minutes – Motion to approve minutes from Sept 1st 2016. Janet moved to approve minutes, Ethel seconded, motion passed unanimously.

Action Item: Vote on Isbell Conservation Easement proposal

Announcement:

The City has a potential opportunity to spend the remaining money from the 1995 Open Space bond. The money can be used for open space including recreational park land. The possibility would include a new park in the Franklin to the Fort neighborhood.

Isbell Property 2006 Open Space Bond Project Proposal

Open Space Bond funding request to purchase a conservation easement across the 75 acre parcel.
Near Council Grove & the Clark Fork River

Historically Agricultural Area

- Rural urban fringe – farming, development, natural areas.
- Parcel is ranked as a prime soil production.
- Includes a riparian area – lots of wildlife diversity particularly birds and important nesting habitat.
- Located in the Clark Fork-Grass Valley Important Bird Area

Isbell – Proposed for Development

2010 a proposal for subdivision was approved for 16 lots.

Because the subdivision was never constructed the approval expired; however, the area could be turned into developable lots in the future if someone chose to start the process all over again. The Isbell property is tucked into an area that is similarly developed.

- Conservation easements are important when many parcels are privately owned.
- The land owner contributes financially as well.

Isbell Family Goals

- Continue their agricultural business.
- Promote educational opportunities.
- Work with the National Audubon Society to improve habitat for the bird population.
- Preserve the soil.

Conservation Easement Terms

- The terms of the easement last in perpetuity

- Still meet the Isbell family goals of agriculture infrastructure.

Isbell Parcel

- Existing fields protected for continued agriculture no buildings.
- Two acre building envelope – residence for themselves & host educational seminars.
- Lower left hand corner of parcel available for barns or sheds.
- Riparian area buffer zone – no structures, no grazing, no agriculture.

Review Value Breakdown

- Highest & best unencumbered value – 16 lot development
- Conservation easement value: \$685,000
- Easement value purchase price: \$150,600

Key Values

- Open space
- Agriculture: lands & soils – trend toward smaller parcels, more affordable parcels and local food system.
- Value for public – Conservation easements in general are less expensive than an outright purchase.
- Landowner still pays taxes and maintains property. It's another tool for protecting important parcels of land.

Conservation Easement Process

Isbell family currently going through the vetting process to ensure they know the governing rules of the easement terms. They will make sure the easement terms will mesh with their goals and are not in any way in conflict now and or in the future.

Term Guidelines

- Agricultural impacts
- Grazing impacts
- Structures – A key easement term will not allow multiple lots/division of land
- Slough –buffer from agriculture & potential farming operations runoff - Water rights and State & Federal flood plan

Elizabeth Recap of OSAC Review Process

- Rough cut – broad assessment to determine if the purposes of the project is consistent with the Open Space plan, Open Space ordinance.
- Contributions Matrix – Open Space plan language
- Innate Characteristics Matrix: Agricultural Lands
- OSAC Committee member Alexis Gibson conducted the baseline survey and wanted to notify the committee to avoid any potential conflicts of interest.

Recommended Motion: Ethel moves to approve the motion as its written, Anna seconds and all approve.

Motion: OSAC recommends that City Council approve the expenditure of \$75,000 of the City's portion of the 2006 Open Space Bond to help purchase a conservation easement across the 75 acre Isbell property.

Next Step

Thursday, October 20 - County Open Lands Committee will vote on whether to approve expenditure of \$75,000 of the *County's* portion of the 2006 open space bond, to bring the total amount of public funding to \$150,000.

November 16 – Joint Public Hearing with the County Commissioners and City Council who have the final vote.

Grant Creek Trail Update.

Bert Lindler: Big part of the trail has been paid for by the County. Trail development continues as more sections are added.