

SCCC Board Meeting March 16, 2021

Zoom, guests of David Chase

Board members present: David Chase, Molly Child, Chris Collins, Judy Frey, George Johnson, Judy Hill Lovins, Jill Sabella, Helene Slansky, Vicki Treece

Guests: Michael Kinsley, Chelsea Brundige, Steve Child, Seth Mason and Zach Smith from Lotic, Marcus Bach and Tom Newland, planner for the Bach application

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chris noted that this spring the McCabe Ranch will shutting the ranch road to the public, and only working dogs will be allowed on the ranch. It is posted as a private road, and by summer there may be gates.

CONSENT AGENDA

Minutes

The Minutes of February 16, 2021 were approved by Helene and seconded by Judy Hill.

Treasurer's Report

Vicki posted that the unrestricted account is at \$18,511.97. The Snowmass water work restricted account is at \$13,540.51, for a total of \$32,052.48. Income came from a gift from Molly and Steve Child, a 2020 Pitkin County donation of \$600 and a 2021 Pitkin County donation of \$600. This Pitkin County donation goes to all Caucus in Pitkin County annually. Expenses were \$224 for website national domain yearly contract and \$218.75 to Design Finch for monthly maintenance.

Design Finch presently posts the Constant Contacts and the meeting agendas. After implementing the pending website revisions, Devin Child will take over the monthly website maintenance.

WATER

Capitol Creek Water Flow Study Report/Lotic Hydrological, LLC

Seth Mason, principal of Lotic, gave an in-depth presentation of the study Lotic made of the stream flow and water quality of Capitol Creek. The Capitol Creek Hydrological Analysis and Decision Support was started two years ago and was put on hold the first year until water was more scarce. Jessica Mason checked the five designated sites for streamflow measurements and checked the watershed for data and did simulation models - Motivation for Analysis, Fluid Work and Simulation Model Construction, Climate Change Scenario Planning Results, Implications for Aquatic Biota, Other Limiting Factors, and Potential Opportunities for Alternative Water Management.

The three main tributaries for Capitol Creek are Nicholson Creek, Lime Creek, and Little Elk Creek.

This study was done (on the initiative of the Snowmass Capitol Creek Board) to understand better the health of the aquatic systems, water conservation and management and meeting the varied needs of agricultural and residential water needs. Taken into consideration are the riparian biota systems - food and shade - and aquatic biology.

There is not a lot of historic records of streamflow.

Jessica began collecting data in 2020 at the five sites. She found the low flow portions of the creek are significantly dewatered during late summer and fall and developed a set of hydrological simulation models for the water shed.

Lotic developed potential future states, i.e. influenced by climate change.

Drawing from the Colorado formula scenarios CWCB (Colorado Water Conservation Board) - 38 years of each following time frame:

“A” - business as usual

“C” Cooperative Growth

“E” Hot Growth

The scenarios include an assessment of climate change and its impact on hydrology and water use.

Chris commented that agriculture demands will make a difference in the future, not so much made by residential and commercial. Hotter, dryer and longer seasons will create more water demand.

In the future Colorado water law will be more enforced. Less “gentlemanly agreements” in order to conserve ag water.

There are patterns in the results.

A concern is the late summer/early fall limited spawning season for brown trout.

Zach Smith commented water is a public resource, but water rights are private property rights.

Project types: protect existing flows; increase stream flows; importance of diversion changes; irrigation scheduling; In Stream Flow (at 10 cfs).

David commented how there has always been a tradition of cooperation.

Steve spoke on how the various ditches could be adjusted to accommodate dry years and seasonal demands.

David commented that the Caucus needs to reflect on the report. To read it and come back with questions.

George suggested a summary be made of the report for easier comprehension.

The Lotic report will be posted on the SCCC website with a Constant Contact sent to inform Caucus members.

LAND USE

Marcus and Lara Bach Application

Tom Newland presented the Bach application, Lot 2 Dickson Subdivision (1989). This application is asking for an expansion of a previously approved activity envelope (2017) to accommodate a foot bridge, a CDU, waste and propane storage systems. The building plan is a four-bedroom home, a two-bedroom CDU, a footbridge over Snowmass Creek, and a possible greenhouse. The activity meets requirements of distancing 100' from the high water creek mark, and a 50' distance from the scenic-designated Snowmass Creek Road requirement.

Board concerns were the location of the proposed driveway, it being presently located in a part of the road where lately there have been several serious car accidents due to road conditions and visibility. Also having to build up a ramp from Snowmass Creek Road to accommodate the several foot drop-off the 16' wide driveway would have to the activity site elevation - and the consequential disturbance this would make to the wildlife corridor/watering areas in that close vicinity. There are sightings in that area of mountain lions coming to drink as

well as elk and deer herds. Also, the high water table along the creek, septic tanks, and propane gas tanks buried next to the road bank.

Vehicular traffic along the road near the proposed driveway entrance - bike, car and construction truck traffic - is already a concern and will become more of a concern with much planned construction coming.

David requested story poles be installed, as well as driveway markers for the Caucus to view. The Caucus will schedule a visit to the site.

Gateway Bridge

Discussion was concerning the County's current safety proposals at Gateway Bridge. The concerns are the accident potentials of upcoming traffic hitting the bridge, with effective visibility possibly influenced by the cottonwood trees located just before the narrow bridge view obstruction of old cottonwood trees on the creek side of Snowmass Creek Road.

The County is proposing the possibility of removing several old cottonwood tree stands which block view of the bridge entrance and also adding warning road signs - like sharp right turn, and narrow bridge.

Molly Child and Michael Kinsley drafted a letter for the County, which Caucus members reviewed. The Board agreed that these recommendations respect the authority and expertise of the County planners, especially GR Fielding, longtime County road planner.

The Caucus hopes the County will consider alternatives to removing the old cottonwood trees by replacing existing warning signs with more effective ones, continuing to clear the low brush around the trees along the road and creek bank to improve visibility to the upcoming narrow bridge, hopefully to avoid having to remove the old cottonwoods. Also, effective speed limit signs, and a painted stripe or speed bumps along the edges of the road as hazard warning indicators.

Their letter will be further researched by the Board and then sent to the County.

ADJOURN

The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 9:30