

SCCC Minutes draft #1 9.18.18

Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus Board Meeting September 18, 2018
Snowmass Fire Station Annex

Board members present:

Helene Slansky, David Chase, Chris Collins., George Johnson, Chris Bergerud, Jeffrey Woodruff, Jill Sabella

Guests: Jenn Vorhees, Alice Collins, Chelsea Brundige, Bill Lederer

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Minutes of August 2018 were approved. David motioned; Chris Bergerud seconded. All in favor.

TREASURERS REPORT

There is \$17,301.17 in the unrestricted Snowmass Capitol Creek account, \$24,980.51 in the restricted Snowmass Creek water work account for a total of \$42,281.68.

The annual Caucus picnic's donations brought in \$2,035, with a generous gift from Mark Grotjahn, new owner of the Child Ranch. The Curry Trio, musicians at the picnic, has yet to submit an invoice.

COMMITTEES

Communication

Chris Bergerud will post the Roaring Fork Conservancy's online version of "Voter Water Issues" on the SCCC website. It is a two-question approach to all candidates running for all state offices this fall. The printed version will be distributed to non-political locations, such as libraries.

David spoke on the Upper Snowmass Creek Caucus' fire-level-danger road signs at the intersections of Watson Divide Road and Snowmass Creek Road and the intersection of Snowmass and Capitol Creek Roads, and whether the SCCCaucus should consider posting such a fire-level-danger sign further up Capitol Creek Road. Such a sign requires nearly daily updating.

Land Use

David Chase discussed his follow up communication with Andrea Korber, architect at the Abundant Acres site, about Caucus members concerns with the Russell site and the County's lack of communication with the Caucus on controversial issues which have emerged this summer. The Russell will not file another development plan but they are willing to move some tree landscaping to new locations as initially requested by the Caucus's Land Use Committee in their letter sent to the County in August 2017 - namely the south, southwest and southeast sides of the construction site. Their focus instead had been on the vantage from East Sopris Creek Road. Chris Collins stated the county's original approved activity plan, which the Land Use Committee of the SCCC reviewed and commented on with recommendations in the letter to the county, was not followed up by County communication to the SCCCaucus when additions were made to the activity envelope. The two specific additions in question are the judge's stand at the south side of the riding arena, and the installed loudspeaker system.

Bill Lederer, resident directly west of Abundant Acres addressed his comments to the Caucus. Letterer said Ken Smith had informed him that a barn and a corral would be built on the Abundant Acres site. He also question whether a neighbor's approval is needed for County approval, whether P&Z approved the site drawings, and stated that he never received a site plan for his approval. He questioned the Judge's stand - which was not on the approved plan - and a cattle coral which was on the original approved plan but was not actually built.

Chris Collins commented the County should have sent out notice to neighbors, and the County failed to inform the Caucus of modifications to site plan.

Jenn Vorhees expressed her concern that the use of a loudspeaker system at the arena could disturb the bird population which is significant the large meadow, and also the color of the arena surface material.

Chris Collins commented that if there is abuse with a special events permit, they will not get a second permit. Letterer asked if there is anything else concerned neighbors can do. Chris encouraged neighbors to talk to the owners, the Russells, to talk to Steve Child, and let them know that there was never any notice of any hearing to be had with direct neighbors.

Helene commented that the owners would do themselves a favor in the community if they would clarify the misunderstandings that seems to exist with their intentioned use of events at the arena area. David commented they will be finished with construction late October, except for a barn which will be built next year. George expressed concern with Abundant Acres pond water from the Boran & White ditch, even with evaporation permit. David commented that once construction is finished at the site the Caucus will be diligent in assessing it's effect.

Chase Solar Project

David Chase presented boards with the plans for a solar array installation on the Chase property at 1801 Rose Spur Lane. This installation will have a 45 KW capability, 128 panels 8' high and ground-mounted, a matt-nonreflective surface, 8' ground-mounted solar array in a well hidden area. A gap point with an adjacent neighbor will be filled with willows and spruce. George moved to accept the plan as proposed. Chris Bergerud seconded. All approved and David Chase abstained from the vote.

Water

George and Chelsea made presentations on Capitol Creek's water level and discussed the extreme dryness this year and monitoring the water level and studying it's effect on fish and general river life.

George presented a study he did mid-September on Snowmass and Capitol Creeks water temperatures and estimated low flow with respect to maintaining a viable trout population during this drought season. Also that when the ditches are shut down, which will be soon, there will be more water in the creek. He commented that over the winter the creek needs 5 cfs to maintain the fish.

David asked if there is anything the Caucus can do. George suggested seeing if any irrigators would sell their water rights to go to the creek, but that this year all are now on survival water .

Chelsea discussed a "stream management plan", using fish management as the indicator of creek health and to do a biological assessment and look at flow conditions and gauge return

flows and what the community can do about low flows. To learn “here is how our creek works” in its stream flow, what the creek needs to survive, and what happens when flow drops.

Snowmass Water & Sanitation now keeps a minimum water flow in Snowmass Creek because they know what the creek needs.* She recommended a Capitol Creek study, with measurement points, “synoptic” or “snap shot” assessment, flow maps, water flow and temperature measurements, and how the fish species are effected and where is the most stress.

The in-stream flow, developed by the state of CO, was determined at 10 cfs to meet the needs of humans and streamlife.

Chris Bergerud asked if funds exist for such a study?

Chelsea commented that yes, there are funds from non-profits and that the best time for a such a study is Aug/Sept/Oct. David recommended that since now we are at the end of the water year, we should wait until spring - May/June to determine whether to do a fall 2019 study.

Chelsea stated that 7 cfs cannot sustain the fish over the winter, therefore we need to create a shared understanding on how to keep our creeks alive and that water is one of the easiest points for the Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus and the Upper Snowmass Creek Caucus to partner on.

Chelsea also commented that the Aspen Ski Corp wants to do a study to expand snowmaking on Snowmass Mt. in the Alpine Springs area, and to have the snowmaking capability longer into the winter than is presently done. They have rights to some of the water. Chelsea encourages the SCCCaucus to get involved in this process/discussion and to combine efforts with USCC to get a standing in the conversation. David mentioned the Joint Caucus - to get involved.

Jeffrey spoke about the P&Z and BOCC looking into the impact of growth in the valley, especially with house size increasing, that the energy use increases more with larger house size (with additional amenities - pool, heated drive etc) and how to offset the increased energy use/demand. The issue is that now there a max square footage - now 15,000 sf in Owl Creek and USCC - which needs to be reviewed and that alternative energy could be a part of any development and to tied house size with energy use.

Fun-d Raising

Thanks to the McCabe Ranch for again hosting the Caucus picnic. A great valley party and a successful fundraiser.

Adjourn

Helene moved to adjourn the meting. Jill seconded. The meeting adjourned.

*study undertaken by Chelsea--- and Tim McFlynn as Snow ski are was about to take water from Snowmass ...