



PLAN JEFFCO UPDATE

AUGUST 2005

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SAVE SEPTEMBER 17th

FOR PLAN JEFFCO'S WORKSHOP ON
"USING THE MASTER PLAN AS A
MANAGEMENT TOOL" and ANNUAL
MEETING

Open Space has had Master Plans of a sort since 1973, with detailed Master Plans in place since 1989. However, no parks had management plans until 2000. Since 2000 the Open Space staff has developed Management Plans for all existing and new parks. The plans for existing parks were developed in-house with no formal public input. The Management Plans for new parks have had limited public input. There is no approved process or criteria for management plans nor for public or OSAC involvement.

The intent of the workshop is to provide Open Space with ideas from the public on the management planning process. What should the ground rules include? Where should it start? What should be the level of public input and at what stages in the process? What is OSAC's role? Who makes the final decisions? How should a parks' vision be defined? Help us brainstorm these issues and so that we can influence the process. All our other workshops have resulted in Open Space or the County Commissioners acting on the workshop recommendations.

September 17 at the Open Space Hearing Room
700 Jefferson County Parkway
Sign-in and refreshments at 8:30 a.m.
Meeting from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Jefferson County Open Space North Table Mountain Management Plan

The priority of North Table Mountain as open space has existed since the inception of the Jefferson County Open Space (JCOS) program in 1972 and certainly in the minds of citizen open space advocates even before that time.

The open space acquisition process for North Table Mountain commenced administratively in the 1980's and early 1990's with a number of Open Space Advisory Committee (OSAC) resolutions, summarized and finalized under OSAC Resolution 6-91 in 1991. Resolution 6-91 stated that North Table Mountain is "highly desirable open space", that it "would be suitable for scenic preservation, landform preservation, trail purposes, and wildlife protection" and that North Table Mountain represents a "unique landform in Jefferson County". It was identified as one of six significant preservation areas in the 1998 and 2003 JCOS Master Plans.

With the acquisition of the Lafarge parcel in 2002, virtually all of North Table Mountain has been preserved as open space, bringing to a close its acquisition phase. The end of open space acquisition signaled the beginning of open space management of North Table Mountain. A management plan, including a trails plan, has been proposed by JCOS staff. The management plan proposed for North Table Mountain has engendered considerable controversy with regard to trails use, specifically whether mountain biking is an appropriate trails use in this particular park.

Examination of this issue must be considered in the context of (i) the general goals and objectives of the JCOS program and (ii) the significant values associated with the acquisition and preservation of North Table Mountain as open space.

The 2003 JCOS Master Plan states that "The mission of the Open Space Program is to provide a living resource of open space lands and waters throughout Jefferson County for the physical, psychological, recreational and social enjoyment of present and future generations." Furthermore, goals of the program are "to provide quality trail development" and to "ensure that natural resources are managed and conserved through sound scientific and biological principles". The stated mission and goals of the Open Space Program underscore a tension between preservation and recreation objectives that can sometimes be the source of controversy in the development of park management plans, in general, and for North Table Mountain, specifically.

The Board of Plan Jeffco believes that the following are the salient issues to consider in formulating a management plan for North Table Mountain:

(1) In the 1998 JCOS Master Plan North Table Mountain was identified as a significant scenic land, development of which would have to be "sensitively done, with preserving the land's visual quality being the key issue". The Natural Heritage Inventory of Jefferson County, commissioned by JCOS in 1993, identified North Table Mountain as one of twenty seven "conservation sites", deemed high priority open space acquisitions on the basis of biodiversity and natural values. Open Space acquisition of North Table Mountain has obviously been primarily justified on the basis of its high quality natural values as well as its scenic value as an iconic landmark.

Thus, North Table Mountain requires a more sensitive and conservative management plan than has been proposed and one which

emphasizes natural values over recreational values. This type of management plan would be consistent with the primary values that were to be preserved thru Open Space acquisition and management.

(2) Historically, JCOS management practice has made it difficult to alter park usage management once it has been established. Given that the natural values of the North Table Mountain require conservative and sensitive management, unless this open space park is managed initially in a conservative manner, its natural values will be irrevocably damaged before the management plans would be modified.

(3) Management of trails on North Table Mountain as multi-use should not be considered an irrevocable axiom of JCOS park management. The elements of a management plan should be devised for each park according to its specific needs. Many JCOS parks and trails have been managed with restricted use, when deemed ecologically appropriate. While the application of an alternate or separated use trail plan is an innovative approach, it not appropriate for North Table Mountain, an ecologically sensitive open space park.

(4) North Table Mountain resides in the greater Golden community, with more densely populated neighborhoods immediately adjacent to access. This is unlike most other open space parks. The use of mountain bikes will greatly increase the number of users and create problems in these densely populated neighborhoods.

(5) The recent Open Space acquisition of most of South Table Mountain provides an excellent opportunity for JCOS to develop a comprehensive management plan for both mesas. Additionally, South Table Mountain has had greater human impact and mountain biking is currently ongoing. Therefore, a comprehensive plan which includes some form of multi-use trail management is more appropriate for South Table Mountain than North Table Mountain.

(6) The Trails Use Task Force is a group comprised of representatives from user groups of hikers/ runners, equestrians and mountain biker and was formed to advise the Open Space Program on trail user conflicts. The Task Force does not represent users not involved with trail use, per se. In its present form the Task Force is not equipped to resolve the issues associated with formulation of a initial comprehensive management plan for North Table Mountain and should not be charged with resolving being the sole venue for public involvement. Rather, the Task Force is and should remain a conflict resolution tool in implementing an already formulated park/ trails management plan.

Therefore, we believe that a coordinated comprehensive plan should be developed for both North and South Table Mountains which recognizes their different qualities and values and which promotes uses compatible with our responsibilities as stewards of our Open Space lands.

By Elliot Brown



Tony Sabatini

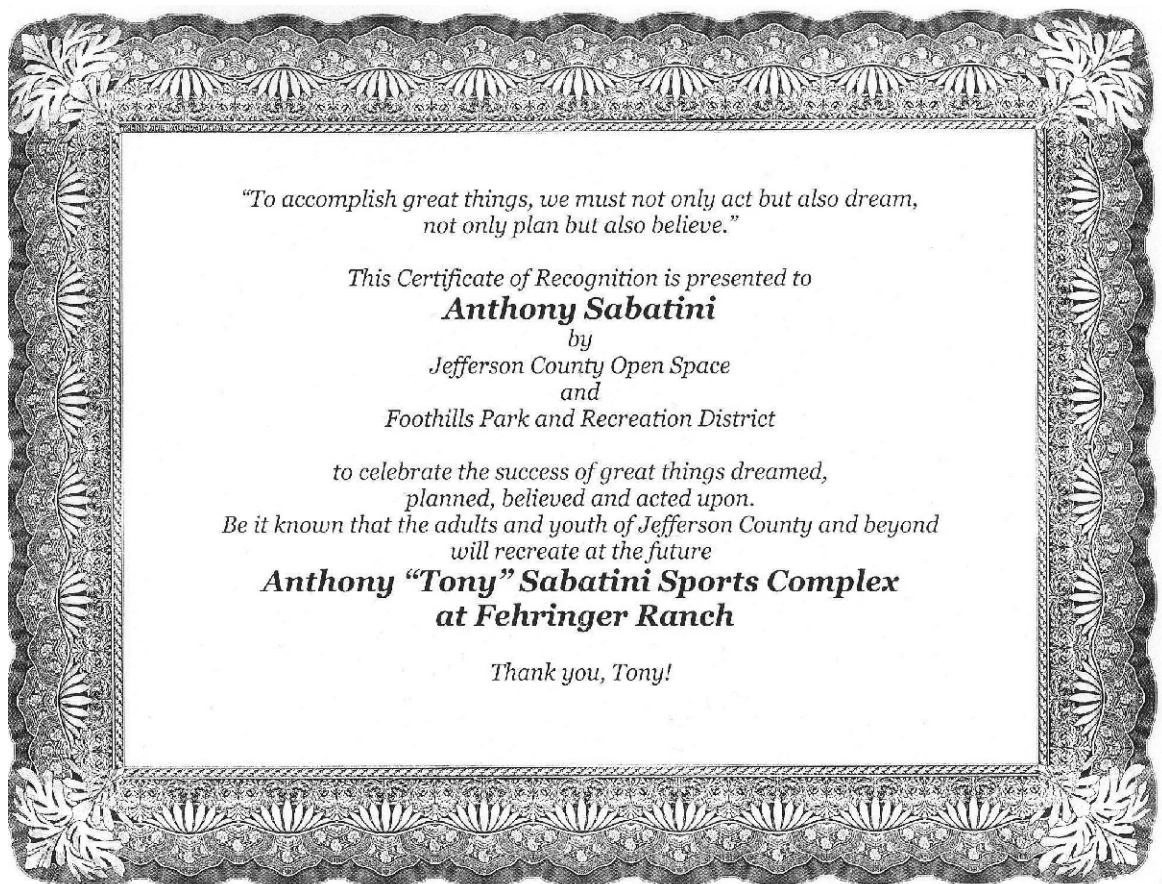
An era of the Jefferson County Open Space program ended June 21, 2005, with the death of Tony Sabatini. Tony was appointed to the first Open Space Advisory Committee in 1973 and served until he moved back to his Pueblo birthplace in 1999.

Land use was dear to Tony's heart. He was the administrator for the Colorado Land Board for 37 years and was on the Lakewood Planning Commission for 22 years. His active volunteerism led to Lakewood creating the Tony Sabatini citizenship award that is awarded to individuals with a selfless dedication to the community. Tony was the first recipient.

Tony's wife Eva preceded him in death in 2003. Tony had a heart attack in 2004 while on a trip to Italy and was not able to overcome the complications.

Tony was a proponent for the acquisition of the Fehringer Ranch property owned by the Denver Water Board long before the Board was interested in selling. When the Board finally considered selling the property, it became desirable for a number of entities. The Ranch now is the site of D'Evelyn Junior/Senior High Schools, has a site for a library, has a site for a R-1 Athletic complex, has a site for a junior college campus, has a large commercial section, plus space for a sports complex, trails, and natural areas. In early June, Open Space and Foothills Park and Rec District honored Tony by naming the future sports complex the "Anthony "Tony" Sabatini Sports Complex at Fehringer Ranch."

Memorial contributions may be sent to the Jeffco Open Space Foundation, 5855 Wadsworth Bypass, Bldg A, Suite 100, Arvada, CO 80003.



Proposed 2006 Open Space Budget

For the last few years, preparing the Open Space budget could be considered easy from one perspective and difficult from another. The years prior to 1999 had shown 6 to 7% annual increases in sales tax revenue and there were lots of decisions that could be considered. However, since 1999 the sales tax revenue has shown an average growth of 1.5% a year. Meanwhile, the bond funds have allowed a doubling of the amount of land requiring supervision and maintenance.

Salaries are the major cost of the operations and administration portions of the budget. Over these past six years salaries have been increased in accordance with overall County guidelines. At the same time additional bonds have been issued, increasing the amount of annual debt service. The area that has had to accept decreases in funding has been trail and park development. The budgeted amounts for development have decreased from a budgeted \$7.5 million (including parks, trails, joint ventures, and sports facilities grants) in 2000 to \$4.6 million budgeted for 2006.

Even with the decrease in development, the program has been spending about \$3 million more per year than is available from new revenue. This spending has been possible because of a large surplus that would have been used for acquisitions had the bond issue not passed in 1999. This surplus is almost exhausted; so if revenues do not increase, additional cuts will need to be made in development.

In the past Open Space mainly has looked for grants to assist in acquisitions. Grants applications for maintenance and development now will have equal priority.

The 2006 budget includes: \$13.15 million for

debt service, \$2.72 million for park development with Centennial Cone and Hildebrand Ranch parks receiving \$400,000 each, \$750,000 for trail development with \$500,000 destined for the Bear Creek trail in Evergreen, and \$2 million for joint ventures with cities and park and rec districts. The proposed amount for operations is \$9.49 million, a 1.7% increase from the estimated 2005 expenditure.

The County-wide audit also has impacted Open Space. The audit determined that tenants in the Open Space building were paying too high a rate. The excess for the past four years, \$2 million, has been returned to the general fund and rental income will be reduced by \$600,000 per year.

Funds from the GOCO grant for South Table Mountain will be received in 2007 and 2008. These funds probably will be used to replenish the surplus.

A good thing for the budget is that the land not used by Open Space on the Center Campus was transferred to the County General Fund in 2004 with Open Space receiving \$6,495,000. These funds will serve as a reserve for a few years.



KEN FOELSKE RETIRES

Warm approval, mellow satisfaction and a myriad of memories filled the room as Open Space staff, members of the Advisory Committee, friends and family gathered to honor the retirement of Planning Manager Ken Foelske, as he ends thirty years of noteworthy service in helping to create what is considered one of the nation's top civic land preservation programs.

Ralph Schell, current Director of Open Space, made note of the fact that he and B. J. Ellison and Ken had worked together in the early days of planning under former Director Ray Printz. He also noted the somewhat unsettled events in the 80's, when there was a proposal to split the one cent sales tax in half in order to pay for a jail and when there had been an Ad Hoc examination of the program and a management and performance audit which greatly slowed development and acquisition during that time. He went on to review the many noteworthy projects that occurred through the years as the program realized its strength and potential. Ken was the man put in the position of giving form and direction to the varied aspects of many large new parks and eventually to the county wide Trails 2000 Master Plan. Coordination with the cities and with the recreation districts and more recently, with Denver Mountain Parks were all part of the job. He ended by presenting Ken with a beautiful framed picture of Clear Creek.

Former Director, Ray Printz, who originally hired Ken, (tan, fit and smiling, in shorts, T-shirt and running shoes,) spoke warmly of the years working with Ken and meeting the many challenges of what turned out to be such a complex and multi-faceted program.

In making his farewell comments, Ken acknowledged a love for his work and the

satisfaction that had come from being with the program early on and seeing it grow to its' present state of 51,000 acres and a substantial start on the 250 miles of planned trails. He also warmly praised his staff and his wife, (who shared his patience, we do mean his PATIENCE), in attending the inevitable night OSAC meetings and public input outreaches.

On a lighter note, Ken had prepared humorous gifts for several staff members and for the new Planning Manager, Amy Ito. They, in turn, presented him with a designer T-shirt in his favorite color, black.

Plan Jeffco President, Margot Zallen, thanked Ken for the cooperation shown to our organizations' various workshops and in providing requested information or maps and time spent in interviews for the newsletter or discussions on informational matters. Many Plan Jeffco members have worked with Ken since the 70's and so the congratulations have authenticity.

The feelings of accomplishment and a kind of sober surprise that the dream has actually happened, and is happening, gave this event a special energy. In addition to a plaque, and a framed art photo of a South Table Mtn. yucca plant, she also awarded him a lifetime membership in Plan Jeffco.

A quotation, by Bruce Marton, was on the invitation sent by Open Space:

“Most successful men have not achieved their distinction by having some new talent or opportunity presented to them. They have developed the opportunity that was at hand.”

Growing up on an Iowa farm, Ken started his college education at Iowa State, majoring in Landscape Architecture. After a stint in Viet Nam, he began his professional career with the Colorado State Parks Dept., then a time with Denver Parks before accepting a position with the fledgling Jefferson County Open Space Dept. During the next years, he added a Master's degree in Administration to his resume.

In a recent interview, he reminisced about some of the pivotal events in Open Space. The subjects that came up: the development and influence of OSAC, the continuation and existence of Plan Jeffco as a player, the amendment of the resolution to include recreational capital improvement expenditures, Developing a Master Plan with the help of professional planners BRW, developing the Trails 2000 Plan, working with adjoining counties on Commissioner Gary Laura's initiative for preserving the 150 mile Mountain Backdrop, The approval and passing of a resolution to permit the bonding of 160 million dollars for accelerated purchases of land, interfacing with DRCOG, (Regional Planning), U. S. Fish and Wildlife (Rocky Flats), Great Outdoors Colorado, (Clear Creek

Corridor Grant) and Denver Parks. Among his many outside accomplishments and associations are: National Trails Symposium speaker, Lariat Loop Heritage Alliance, Land Use Coalition moderator, Contributor to Jeff County Community Plans, and 2002 American Society of Landscape Architects recognition as the Landscape Architects Award of Excellence.

He leaves with development plans in place for Clear Creek and Bear Creek Corridors, presently waiting promised funding. Most recently, he worked with Amy and staff on review of possible land purchases for the remaining bond funds, which are to be spent in the next two or three years. He suggested that one way that the Mountain Backdrop coordinative effort might be strengthened would be to request GOCO funding and participation, since it is a broad regional project.

We have all benefited from Ken's work and dedication to Open Space.

By Marilyn Mueller



Commissioner's Dinner

The annual PLAN Jeffco -Open Space-Commissioners Dinner, usually held in the fall, was delayed until March because after the November election we would have new Commissioners. All three commissioners, - Kevin McCasky, Jim Congrove, and Dave Auburn were present along with County Administrator Patrick Thompson, Asst. Administrator Nanette Neelan, County Attorney Frank Hutfless. Director Ralph Schell and key members of his staff as well as most members of OSAC.

Excitement ran high in the crowded banquet room due to the recent important purchase of 737 acres of South Table Mountain from Coors, aided by the Trust for Public Lands. Held at the Mount Vernon Country Club, the pre-dinner Social Hour gave those attending a chance to talk informally as well as to continue to their discussions during dinner.

Following the lavish buffet, PJ President Margot Zallen extended greetings and briefly presented PLAN Jeffco's activities of the past year. She warmly expressed her strong approval of the Open Space acquisition actions during the year. She closed by encouraging the new commissioners to work toward finding ways to improve communications with the citizens of the county.

Dave Auburn, speaking for all of the Commissioners, assured the guests that they are all appreciative of the Open Space program and will ask for continuing accountability and supportive information on future acquisitions and trail development.

Plan Jeffco presented awards to representatives from Coors, Neil Jaquet, Sam Walker, Don Mac Donald, and Rob Witwer, and to The Trust for Public Lands, represented by, Woody Beardsley

and Doug Robotham for their efforts toward preserving South Table Mountain. Table Mountains Conservation Fund, and Save the Mesas also were honored for their work over many years to have the land preserved as part of the Jeffco Open Space Program. The unique awards were created by PJ board member Wanda Blackburn.

This event always generates a special kind of energy and people stay afterward, talking with unusual animation in many clusters, seemingly reluctant to go home.

By Marilyn Mueller



PRICKLY POPPY

OSAC NOTES – OSAC NOTES OSAC NOTES

JANUARY 2005 - There were no regular meetings. A meeting was held January 20 to hear presentations for Joint Venture grants and determination of the grant awards.

FEBRUARY 7, 2005 - Study Session
Lisa de Graaf, Planner, presented the Visitor Survey Results for 2004. The parks surveyed were Apex, Elk Meadow, Matthews/Winters, Mount Falcon, and White Ranch. Hiking and biking were the most popular uses of these parks. Matthews/Winters had an increase in hikers and a decrease in bikers. Biking showed a decrease at Elk Meadow, Mount Falcon, and White Ranch. Apex showed an increase in biking. Matthews/Winters had the highest level of reported conflicts.

Regular Meeting

Lakewood requested that the County-owned property adjacent to the Health Department at Alameda and Kipling be added to their acquisition priorities. A resolution was passed to pursue a conservation easement on 107 acres adjacent to the 310-acre conservation easement that Open Space holds West of the Crawford Gulch road. The purpose would be trail corridor from White Ranch to Golden Gate and/or Centennial Cone.

The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service Comprehensive Plan for Rocky Flats was reviewed. A field trip was scheduled to view three Douglas Mountain properties. Impact of the Highway 73 widening on the Flying J Ranch Park was reviewed.

MARCH 3, 2005 - Study Session
Staff presented an overview of Preservation Concepts - a look at all possible options for purchasing or securing interests for Open Space and the types of lands and interests that could be considered.

Regular Meeting - North Table Mountain Water and Sanitation (NTMWS) presented a proposal for a easement to place a 1.5 million gallon water underground on the North slope of North Table Mountain. Staff recommended rejection of the request and it died on a tie vote, with the recommendation that staff and NTMWS look for an alternate site.

After much discussion on the three Douglas Mountain properties the vote was to forego further negotiation. The principal objections were the steep topography and the poor access.

A resolution was approved to exchange Open Space's option on 5.8 acres at 96th and Indiana for a conservation easement. Charles McKay, the owner, felt that the Option made him reluctant to make improvements to the property.

Ralph Schell reported that the Commissioner's wanted to have less day-to-day involvement with Open Space administration than had previous Commissions. There was much discussion on how to handle activities that previously were reviewed by the Commissioners.

APRIL 7, 2005 - Study Session
Staff provided more details on the Preservation Concepts with a numerical weighting for method of potential preservation.

Regular Meeting
Negotiations were approved for a 29-acre property at the Northeastern corner of Alderfer/Three Sisters Park that would allow easy trail connections to Evergreen Lake.

A resolution was approved for negotiations for a trail corridor from Red Rocks to the Town of Morrison.

MAY 5, 2005 - Study Session
 Ceremony at Alderfer/Three Sisters Park on transfer of title of Evergreen Mountain to Open Space.

Regular Meeting -
 A request by Foothills Recreation for a 20-acre site at Chatfield and Carr that consisted of 14 separate parcels was presented. The resolution was tabled until all priorities are considered for the remaining bond funds.

Staff presented a resolution for a better location for the water tank easement requested by North Table Mountain Water and Sanitation District in March. The revised site was acceptable to staff and OSAC so a resolution for the easement was approved.

JUNE 2, 2005 - Study Session
 Staff rankings based on the Preservation Concepts for the acquisitions that are in process were reviewed. There was a general discussion that related to a number of the properties that are in process.

Regular Meeting -
 Staff presented information on a number of properties in the Mount Tom - Van Bibber Creek headwaters Natural Area. The properties are being considered for a trail corridor from Centennial Cone to White Ranch as well as for their natural qualities.

JULY 7, 2005 - Study Session
 Ralph Schell presented the proposed budget for 2006. The budget is detailed in a separate article.

Regular Meeting -
 The proposed 2006 budget was approved.

A request by Westminster for acquisition of a six-acre in-holding in Westminster City Park at 104th and Sheridan was approved for negotiation.

There was an extended discussion on policy revisions to match the Commissioners desire for less day-to-day involvement with Open Space Administration. OSAC felt that the policies still should allow for OSAC approval of most acquisition activities and approval was tabled until revisions could be made.



One-seed juniper

If you have not!!! Join PLAN Jeffco or renew your Membership today!

PLAN Jeffco is the county-wide volunteer citizen's group that organized and drafted the Open Space Resolution that resulted in the formation of the Jefferson County Open Space Program in 1972. We currently function as a watchdog group, observing meetings of the Open Space Advisory Committee, participating in subcommittees, and issues groups, proposing and working for important acquisitions, and keeping citizens informed of what is going on in their Open Space Program. PLAN Jeffco provided the leadership for the successful vote for bonds in 1999.

PLAN Jeffco works for Open Space and we work for you!
Please sign up or renew your membership now! Your
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Our membership rate is:

\$25 per year

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If you are, PLAN Jeffco would like to have you on our email tree, so that we can inform you of special events and items that may be of concern to you. We will not share your email address without permission. Please include with your dues payment or email to

Jklitz@comcast.net

Thanks



The Quest of The Purple Fringe

I felt the chill of the meadow underfoot
But the sun overhead;
And snatches of verse and song of scenes like this
I sung or said.

I skirted the margin alders for miles and miles
In a sweeping line.
The day was the day by every flower that blooms,
But I saw no sign.

Yet further I went to be before the scythe,
For the grass was high;
Till I saw the path where the slender fox had
come
And gone panting by.

Then at last and following him I found-
In the very hour
When the color flushed to the petals it must have
been-
The far-sought flower.

There stood the purple spires with no breath of air
Nor headlong bee
To disturb their perfect poise the livelong day
'Neath the alder tree.

I only knelt and putting the boughs aside
Looked, or at most
Counted them all to the buds in the copse's depth
That were pale as a ghost.

Then I arose and silently wandered home,
And I for one
Said that the fall might come and whirl of leaves,
For summer was done.

Robert Frost



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Email: jklitz@comcast.net
Check our website
www.saveopenspace.org

Jefferson County Citizens for
Planned Growth with Open Space

PLAN JEFFCO NEWSLETTER