Anacortes Community Forest Lands Advisory Board
March 5, 2020
6pm
1701 22nd Street (Senior Activity Center)
Preliminary Agenda

I. Call to Order
II. Approve Minutes
III. Public Comments
IV. Communication/Correspondence
V. E-bikes: Accessibility Permit Option
VI. Staff Reports
VII. Other Business

If reasonable accommodation due to a disability is needed
contact Mac Jackson at 360-293-1918
48-hours prior to the meeting date.
ACFL Forest Advisory Board Minutes
February 13, 2020

Members Present: Sandra Starbuck, JoAnn York-Gilmore, Nick Stowe & Brian Wetcher
Staff: Steve Phillips, Bob Vaux and Jonn Lunsford

Meeting called to order: 6:00PM by Chair Brian Wetcher.

Election of 2020 Board Chair: S. Starbuck nominated by J. York-Gilmore, approved by acclimation.

New FAB member Nick Stowe was introduced. He mentioned that he and his partner own the Bikespot, and that he is an avid ACFL recreator. He is looking forward to his work on the FAB.

Minutes: January 9, 2020 minutes approved as submitted.

Public Comments: Stacey Curtis raised some questions regarding the current status of the ACFL Management Plan, and any changes that may have been made since the FAB approved the current plan for consideration by the Planning Commission. Included with these minutes are the March 27, 2019 Planning Commission minutes. It is documented here that the Planning Commission voted to include reference to a bicycle skills park. The ACFL Plan is now awaiting placement on a City Council agenda.

Lunsford requested that S. Curtis email related questions to him so that he would be able to thoroughly address her questions.

Wetcher discussed the Council process as well, noting that the Critical Areas Ordinance will be on the Feb 18 City Council agenda, and that there will be subsequent discussion of the ACFL Plan as a part of this process.

S. Curtis also asked Stowe if he was in favor of the bicycle skills park. He stated that he has not yet decided.

Communication and Correspondence: York-Gilmore mentioned the Parks Commission will be continuing its e-bike discussions at the Mar 10 meeting.

Lunsford reported the AHS Green Club will be doing a wetland enhancement native planting project at the 32nd Street “Swamp” on Feb 17. Parks Manager Nicole Johnston will join this project as well.

Friends of the Forest Executive Director Asa Deane explained that the regular FOF board meetings have moved to the new Barrett Financial Building, 1809 Commercial Avenue. The FOF will be leading a guided hike at Little Cranberry Feb 22nd, and the FOF annual membership meeting will be Feb 26th at the Depot.

Staff reports: Phillips highlighted his written report. Wetcher asked where the main motorcycle infractions have been this winter. The trails at the north end of the 300 trails series were discussed, along with random encounters throughout the ACFL. Vaux encouraged trail users encountering motorized users to call 911. Further FAB discussion ensued.
**E-bikes: Accessibility Permit Option:** Vaux presented a 1-year trial concept for those with ADA permits to be able use class 1 e-bikes for accessibility on the ACFL trail system. Starbuck supported the idea. Wetcher stated that class 2 and 3 e-bikes should continue to be regarded the same as motorcycles in the ACFL. York-Gilmore is concerned about trail damage potential, and is willing to advocate for a 1 year trial period. Believes it is very important that permits be granted to only those who already have an ADA parking permit. Wetcher would like staff to talk with City Attorney Swetnam, and explore costs. Lunsford does not believe there will be a significant budget impact. Stowe is open to further discussion. Vaux agreed to bring specifics back to the FAB for future discussion.

**Other Business:** None.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:46PM

Respectfully submitted: Bob Vaux
Planning Commission Meeting Minutes for March 27, 2019

This is not a verbatim transcript of the meeting and is written in an attempt to capture the general spirit of the discussion based upon notes and video observation by the author. To view the video recording of this meeting, click here, or go to https://www.anacorteswa.gov/700/Watch-Meetings.

Chair McNett called the meeting of March 27, 2019 to order at approximately 5 p.m.

Roll Call
Members Present: Commissioners Moffitt, Graf, MacKenzie, McNett, Cleland-McGrath, Mount and Doll

Minutes
No Minutes were presented for approval at this time.

Correspondence
None

New Business

Public Hearing – Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Plan Amendment
Chair McNett announced the public hearing for the Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Plan Amendment. Ms. Libby Grage, Planning Manager, provided a brief presentation on the proposed updates on the two plans and that these updates correspond to proposals in the 2016 Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Grage then introduced Jonn Lunsford, Parks & Recreation Department Director, to provide an overview of the changes being proposed.

Mr. Lunsford thanked all the volunteers that helped the Parks Department achieve many goals and the generous budget provided by the City Council. Mr. Lunsford outlined the public process on the development of these plans to date and included updates to the comprehensive plans are necessary in order to qualify for grants from the state.

Questions from the Commissioners included whether any substantive changes to the plans have been made since the beginning of the process to which Mr. Lunsford provided that there have been none.

With no further comments, Chair McNett opened the public hearing.

Martha Hall, 2617 16th Street, Anacortes. Ms. Hall does not believe the two plans adequately protect the important critical areas such as significant wetlands, Salish Sea and lake shorelines, fish and wildlife habitat, and steep, unstable slopes and suggests stronger language is needed in both comp plans to protect important critical areas and require compliance with laws such as the Anacortes Critical Areas ordinance and the Shoreline Master Program.

With no further public comments, Chair McNett closed the public hearing.
Commissioners discussed funding sources for the parks, priorities, endowment funding, Guemes Channel Trail access, and concerns regarding permitting for projects. Chair McNett then called for a motion to forward the Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan to City Council for review. Commissioner MacKenzie made a motion to forward the current Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan to City Council with a second by Commissioner Cleland-McGrath. Vote was unanimous on the motion.

**Public Hearing – Anacortes Community Forestlands Comprehensive Plan Amendment**

Chair McNett then introduced the public hearing on the Community Forest Lands Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Lunsford provided responses to questions from the Commissioners including trail management and the requirements of permits for different types of trails and review processes. Chair McNett then opened the hearing for public comments.

**Kevin Foss, 2219 28 Street, Anacortes.** Mr. Foss expressed his support for riding on trails in the forest, a bike park and a bike skills park and the size of park to accommodate riders.

**Julie Gold, 3102 I Avenue, Anacortes.** Ms. Gold expressed her support for a bike park and the positive aspects of bringing youth into the forest lands through bike riding.

**Brian Wetcher, 814 26th Street, Anacortes.** Mr. Wetcher supports the Community Forest Comp Plan and urged the Commissioners to approve the plan be forwarded to City Council as is.

**Thomas Conroy, 4307 Jeanette Road, Anacortes.** Mr. Conroy provided his support of the work performed by the Forest Advisory Board and the City staff.

**Jake Verschuyl, 2210 21st Street, Anacortes.** Mr. Vershuyl provided his support for the mountain bike park and the bike park within the community.

**Ian Lajan, 14379 Rosario Road, Anacortes.** Mr. Lajan provided his support of a skills park at the proposed dump site.

**Josh Gates 3808 W 4th, Anacortes.** Mr. Gates support the trails for mountain bike riding and the skills park.

**Chad Sage, 2024 I Avenue, Anacortes.** Mr. Sage provided his support of the bike park.

**Cooper Nichols, 5677 Patricia Lane, Anacortes.** Mr. Nichols provided his support of the bike park and asked all in attendance to stand up and show their support which included a majority of the room.

**Ms. Stacia Doyle, 700 Haddon Road, Anacortes.** Ms. Doyle supports the bike park.

**Eric Adam, 1902 Copper Pond Place, Anacortes.** Mr. Adams provided his support of the bike park.
Adam McCoy, 2314 33rd Street, Anacortes. Mr. McCoy provided his support for the mountain bike trails and the bike park to provide a place for kids and adult to learn and expand their skills.

Jeff Perkins, 509 4th Street, Anacortes. Mr. Perkins provided his support for a bike park.

In response to questions from the Commission regarding clarification of the proposed skills park, Mr. Lunsford invited Kevin Foss to provide clarification of the proposed park to which Mr. Foss outlined the difference between a contractor driven project and a volunteer process for development of a park of this type.

Catherine Houck, 2318 20th Street Anacortes. Ms. Houck requested the suggestion on page 8 of the 2014 Comp Plan be removed and replaced with a bike park.

Martha Hall, 2617 16th Street, Anacortes. Ms. Hall expressed concerns that the regulations are not being followed when developing trails in the forest lands.

With no further public comments, Chair McNett closed the public hearing.

Commissioners discussed the comp plan development including the bike skills park, if anything had changed since the plan was first developed. Commissioner Moffitt then made a motion to recommend the plan be approved for submittal to the City Council with the amendment to change the dog park to a bike park. Motion seconded by Commissioner Cleland-McGrath with the following votes: Ayes – Graf, MacKenzie, McNett, Cleland-McGrath, Moffitt; Nayes – Mount, Doll. Motion passed.

A large contingent of citizens expressed desire to speak in support of the improvements to the skate park. As the project had already been voted on by the Commissioners to forward to the City Council, Chair McNett allowed the individuals to express their support and informed them this would not be included in the record.

Chair McNett called the meeting to a close at approximately 8 p.m.
Tentative City Council Schedule for Reviewing the Critical Area Regulations:

March 16: General Provisions & Review Procedures (Exemptions, Outdoor Recreation, & Bikes);

April 6: Wetlands and FWHCA’s (Regionally Significant, Buffers, ACFL & Herons);

April 20: Geologically Hazardous, Critical Aquifer, Frequently Flooded Areas, and Definitions;

May 4: Continuance of Public Hearing (general testimony) & Deliberations;

June 1: Deliberations Continued, possible decision.
Violations
Out-of-season motorbike use continues in ACFL. On Friday, February 21 a rider’s fresh tracks were observed on Trail 20 -> 21 and likely continued eastward. Sunny Friday afternoons might be a popular time for certain riders. As always, all trail users are strongly encouraged to call 911 to report this violation when observed.

![Unauthorized motorbike, 27 January 2020](image)

Trails – Drainage, erosion, bridges, fallen trees
Plenty of drainage issues were evident in the forest this past month with the high volume and frequency of rain that we saw. Although some of these (buildup of mud, leaves, woody debris) are easily resolved with a McLeod, some issues (collapsed corrugated plastic pipe, shifting drainage patterns) will take a longer-term fix and may be summer projects.

Many fallen trees obstructed trails again in February. As I write, I still have a short list of blockages to address, but have mostly been able to keep up with the major ones. Reports come to me in various ways – word of mouth, phone calls to City Hall, emails, texts and picture messages, even Trail Reports on the Trailforks app, where I recently created the profile “Steve-ACFL”. I will monitor this occasionally for trail reports that haven’t made it to me and/or my coworkers through other means.

Heart Lake Beaver Dam
For a few weeks in late January into early February, there was a need to address the beaver dam at the outlet of Heart Lake. With the water level rising uncomfortably close to the fog line on Heart Lake Road, we needed to remove some beaver-deposited sticks, mud, root masses, and rocks from their newly constructed dam. Beavers returned each night to reinforce this, but with more forecasted rain and a saturated watershed, we returned during the day to partially remove their materials. Now, as I write this
report, it seems the water level is fine and the forecast is dry relative to what we saw last month. A dam exists but at a sustainable water level.

Invasive Species
I did some work removing and treating Spurge Laurel from one location and English Holly in two different locations. The concept when dealing with plants like this is to “nip it in the bud:” control populations while they are small. A phrase often used by land managers is EDRR: Early Detection, Rapid Response. This says it all: locate and properly identify the population of invasive plants early on, and eliminate the problem as swiftly as possible.

I have found a few locations now where flagging tape is hanging from trees near infestations of Holly or spurge laurel. Thank you, whomever you are, for this. I would have driven by one Holly stand along Trail 22 had I not seen the flagging tape hanging in the forest. In fact, I have already passed that particular spot 3 times before spotting the tape, which seemed to have been hanging there awhile.

Late winter/early spring is a great time to locate populations of Holly, English Ivy, English Laurel, and Spurge Laurel. If you’re on a hike, horseback ride, or bike ride and see them, please let me know – the flagging tape method above is great, but a text message, picture message, or email to accompany the tape is even better. If you need any help identifying these species, I’m happy to help with that also.

Miscellaneous Good News
On Saturday, February 8, 19 enthusiastic community members joined Bob Vaux and me in a litter pickup event on Heart Lake Road. We were able to cover from our northern boundary on Heart Lake Road southward a short distance beyond the Two Big Trees. We sorted our findings into garbage/recycling and ended up with a full truck! Thanks to everyone who gave up their Saturday morning to join us!

Shortly uphill from the northern endpoint of Trail 121 is the site of a newly raised walking surface, thanks to ACFL neighbor Jon Ranney. Jon pointed out that a portion of the trail becomes inundated and makes passage difficult when it’s rainy. Bob Vaux and I scouted out the situation and decided to install a rock/gravel causeway with cedar log retainers. The logs were salvaged from trees that had fallen across trails, and the rock came from ACFL stockpiles that predated me. Jon helped me shovel, wheelbarrow, and rake rock and we finished it in a (lately rare) sunny morning. Thanks, Jon!
Reported Highlights for the March 2020 Forest Advisory Board Meeting

Bob Vaux, Assistant Director, Anacortes Parks & Recreation

The next morning after our February FAB meeting I hit the vacation road with my family, returning to work Monday, Feb 24. In the last few days most of my time has been spent catching up on what I missed, and setting future meetings for promises made. A few items of note...

- Steve and I kept our weekly ACFL Admin meeting on Tuesday, reviewing his work while I was away, and discussing future plans in the woods.

- An unexpected family commitment kept me from attending the Friends of the Forest Annual Membership meeting Wednesday night. Jonn Lunsford was able to attend in my place. I look forward to meeting with Asa next week and catching up.

- Thursday was spent on an interview team, where we met with 8 hopeful candidates to replace Valora; whose 33 years (25 with Mary Snyder) are going to be quite a challenge to replace. It looks like we will be asking back 2 or 3 finalists for further interviews next week.

- Jonn and I spent much of this morning at the old “A” Avenue dump with the water sampling team from the Skagit County Health Department. We should have some results to review in a month or so.

Faithfully Submitted,

Bv /February 28, 2020