

Land Stewardship Committee
February 19, 2016

Roll was called. All present but Mickey Murch.

Agenda

Report of general conclusions from the walk on the bike path (Don Smith, Janine, Genie)

1. Path along Mesa Road is hazardous to bikes because horses use it and their hoof prints make holes in the path. There is a "designated" horse path parallel to the bike path, but getting over the ditch to get to it is dangerous.
2. There should be a safer crossing from the path to the Mesa Park parking lot. Don doesn't think that DPW would allow a crosswalk there, but some better indication of where to cross with signage would be very helpful.
3. There is flooding along the new bike path (above the goat farm). A culvert that was put in is completely closed by sediment. Putting in a downhill culvert and cleaning the closed culvert would solve the problem.
4. There is a sharp turn further down along that path that has limited visibility. The vegetation at that point (pampas grass, etc.) should be cleared to improve visibility.
5. Continuing along the eucalyptus grove parallel to Mesa, the path is generally OK, needs clearing of seeds and bark (debris), but especially branches. A gully is forming in the middle of the path; the path needs to be built up with more material to encourage the water to flow away. Roots growing in the path need continual maintenance (shaving, removing, etc.).
6. The bike path up from the Olema-Bolinas Road needs some widening at the sharpest turn. And there should be better signage to indicate that bikes will be crossing the intersection from the path.
7. Asphalt chunks have been added to the steep path along and above the Sun Pond (between Parcels B and C) for safer access by farm vehicles but is no longer pedestrian-friendly. A plan to develop a parallel pedestrian path closer to the eucalyptus canyon was discussed but not implemented.

In summary:

The bike path should be cleared on a regular basis, and after storm events; a maintenance program with a budget (hours, equipment) should be developed for next year.

For best long-term usability, the bike path should be hardened. Research should be conducted into what materials could be used that would not be cost prohibitive.

The bike and horse paths should be separate wherever possible. The pedestrian path above the Sun Pond should be completed.

Signage should be improved and maintained.

Budget for bike path maintenance

Budget for the work on the bike path: funds to pay people to clean culverts, clear paths, clear vegetation, divert water. Recommend certain amount of time to cover cost of staff hours. Motorized vehicle is needed to support this work. Just hired a fourth person to help, or someone from Mesa Park, or an independent person. Someone with a sweeper? Rovon? Sign a contract to do that work? Time:

once a week, and after a storm, research the surface possibilities? Be careful with motorized equipment: keep noise to a minimum.

Does any money “roll over” to accumulate in a maintenance budget item? No, the Board replenishes the item to bring it up last year’s level.

Someone to take this on? Walk with Don (Rovon)? Expect cost to be considerably less than 10K. What is the expected level of O&M support in the bike path grant? If memories serve, it’s about 5K/year. But it’s hard to keep track of what’s been spent because it is for the most part staff hours. The finance committee could set up the category in the budget. It would be best if the person doing the work was not on the BCPUD staff.

ACTION ITEM: Tish will talk to Rovon and Don about maintenance on the bike path and removing pampas grass.

How soon do we have to make a budget recommendation? The budget is submitted in April, but it’s not final till June.

One key question: does Rovon already have a machine that could do the work?

Sally Stearns will ride through the area on horseback with a friend to look at current conditions, then will walk with any of us go over the trail issues. Is it possible to keep the two paths apart? Some area is shared (above the goat farm). Signs have been taken down. Better, harder surface would prevent horse hoof problems. Best to keep the paths separate wherever possible.

Also should keep in mind pedestrian use! Rules of the road: people > horses > bikes?

Budget for pampas grass removal

Removing pampas grass from that area? And from the rest of the land, as was done last year. Get estimates from Don? From staff? There are two areas of concern: first on sewer pond land where removal is standard for maintenance on the treatment pond area along overlook, the second along the slope where a backhoe should be used.

ACTION ITEM: Get an estimate from Don and/or Rovon to pull it up. Get information in time for a recommendation to the Board in a couple of weeks. (Who is responsible for this?)

Developing a recommendation for habitat restoration on the knoll

Prioritizing recommendations for restoration, suggest starting with the knoll. (Ken)

Judith Lowry has been asked for a specific plan for the knoll. We will ask her if she can go out next week – Ken will let us know when she is available. We should invite others who have interest. We’ll ask her to prepare a budget. When we have specifics, we can set a series of work days. How to pay for the work? Advertise for volunteers - we have release forms and a form to keep track of the hours spent. We can also ask for donations.

ACTION ITEM: Ken will ask Judith to give us an estimate to implement the recommendations for habitat restoration on the knoll.

The BCPUD has applied to Fire Safe Marin for 100K to remove underbrush and trees under 6". Status is pending. Board to put up \$25K.

Money comes from Fire Prevention tax.

Tish brought a page from the Grants.gov website – one grant is for vegetation management and fuels reduction. Applications are due April 19, 2016, just announced.

ACTION ITEM: Genie will look this up and report out.

The steep path

The steep pedestrian path above the Sun Pond, between B and C. The original trail was not wide enough for Mickey's vehicle; he added asphalt chunks to make the path more accessible for farm equipment. Since a separate path was not developed, pedestrians must use the area where asphalt has been placed. This is also a problem for horses. The separate foot trail to should be widened somewhat, perhaps with railroad ties to stabilize it.

Janine will make a date to go to the site with Sally and Mickey to research potential solutions. Mickey should coordinate with us for a work day to do whatever it will take to make the pedestrian path useable.

Other Lands

Other lands owned by the BCPUD. These are parcels on the Mesa, donated to the BCPUD, not to be bought and sold and kept as Open Space. They are not on the tax rolls. They are to be kept open and undeveloped except for adding to property for septic.

ACTION ITEM: Meg and Genie will find out the current condition.

Community expression

Report was accepted report subject to corrections. This past meeting, Jennifer's minutes weren't clear as to final acceptance. Lyman Comstock suggested that we work on this as a plan, with general values, goals, and that it will change as conditions indicate. Congratulations are on in order for the committee. Need to evaluate the recommendations for implementation with estimated budgets.

There was a concern expressed that the tape recorder wasn't working during the meeting, which rarely happens. The minutes are on BCPUD.org.

Consider putting together a work day, maybe in two months, after we have Judith's proposal. Janine: some items are budget items, some are non-budget items. If we get offers of donations can we ask the BCPUD for "in-kind" matching funds or services.

The first item, for example, should be on the next BCPUD meeting. By March 9th we should have the budget numbers in hand with a request to the BCPUD to include in the budget. Finance committee will figure out where it is to come from. Ask Jennifer what the BCPUD is committed for O&M on the bike path project.

Hardening path to reduce grass incursion. Incursive roots – what's the best way to deal with them – to reduce the danger.

Next meeting March 18th at 3:00.

Corrections to the report:

Summary: change dates: when was the property bought? Agreement signed in '72? Look up.

P 7, Genazzi farm, Resource, not Recycle, was burned down as a fire practice

p. 14, the amount is 3 (note after 5 in Alethea's piece)

p. 17 (also included the fire districts)

p. 25 Douglas fir, euks below the sun festival (should be facing north, not south) north facing

p. 26 southeast? Is it? South-southeast