

City Park Neighborhood Advisory Committee

March 28th, 2017

Denver Zoo

MEETING NOTES

Attendees:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>City Council District 9 Office – Val Schwebach</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>City Park West – Mike Fatica</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>City Park Friends and Neighbors – Hank Bootz</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>City Park South – Michelle Reichmuth</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Congress Park – Vicki Eppler</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Uptown on the Hill – Alison Torvik</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Greater Park Hill – Ryan Hunter</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Fearless Leader – Andy Sense</i>

- Peggy Day, DMNS
- Megan Deffner, Denver Zoo
- Piep Van Heuven, Bicycle Colorado
- Jill Locantore, Walk Denver

I. Denver Streets Partnership

A. Who They Are

1. Group of organizations working together to improve Denver's infrastructure for cyclists and pedestrians
 - Advocates to fund, build and maintain complete active transportation systems – e.g. Denver's network of sidewalks and bike lanes
 - Since Mayor Hancock has ID'd 2017 as "the Year of Mobility", the Partnership sees an opportunity for meaningful action and change
 - [Denverstreetspartnership.org](http://denverstreetspartnership.org)
2. Member Groups
 - Bicycle Colorado
 - WalkDenver
 - BikeDenver

- Denver BikeSharing
- Denver Cruiser Ride
- VisionZero Coalition

B. Scope of the Problem

1. Denver's mobility options are chronically underfunded
 - **Bike/Walk funding is not a guaranteed budget line item, has to be requested and approved every year**
2. Existing Options Not Safe
 - 26 people killed walking/biking in Denver last year
 - Almost 80% of cyclists say they worry about getting hit by a car while biking
3. Existing Networks Not Complete
 - Over 25% of Denver streets don't have sidewalks
 - **At current funding levels Denver's planned bike network could take between 40-60 years to complete**
4. As Denver's population is rising, driving is increasing/walking decreasing/bike riding decreasing (ht Denver Downtown Partnership)

C. Denver Streets Partnership's Proposed Solution

1. **Increase Denver's annual spending from about \$5 million to \$40 million/year on biking/walking infrastructure as a dedicated line item in the budget.** In 10 years, this would:
 - Improve/expand the B-cycle Program
 - Fully build out Denver Moves Bicycle Plan
 - Build at least half of missing/substandard sidewalk network (almost 2k miles)
 - Full build-out of bike/sidewalk network would take \$800 million, and 20 years.
 - Note that this would bring Denver's spending levels into line with those of other major cities in the US (e.g. even Las Vegas outspends Denver on bike/ped infrastructure annually)
2. Post build-out, need to include \$20-21 million in annual maintenance of bike/ped networks
 - Mike F: Are you advocating for shift from private property owners' responsibility for sidewalks?
 - Jill: Yes. Just like the City takes responsibility for building and maintaining roads, the City should build/maintain network of sidewalks and bike trails

3. Possible Funding Mechanisms

- Rearrange existing budget to align it with community values
- Go Bond package through ballot measure
- Potential new state-level sales tax dedicated to transportation distributed between state and cities (possible ballot initiative this fall)
- 2018: citizen initiative to raise additional taxes specifically for walking/biking.

Today's message: the current funding level for Denver's bike/ped infrastructure network plan is too low and too sporadic

4. How To Engage/Help:

- Take a supportive position (either CPNAC or constituent organizations) so DSP can list your organization on their website as a supporter
- Pen a supportive letter suggesting support by mid-April
- Write letters to the Denver Post or Denver Business Journal
- Get the word out to your neighborhoods about this effort and encourage them to contact their council people
- Important to do this now bc budget decisions are happening, GO bond decisions are being made, etc.
- Contact state legislatures (go to Bicycle Colorado website)
- Contact Piep for template letter
- Piep and Jill available for presentations
- .PPT could be made available for posting on RNO websites soon

In April Denver Streets Partnership is writing a letter to Mayor, issuing a press release. Currently doing roadshow to get 40+ supporting organizations and mobilize public support for addressing the funding issue. (They now know the support is there: DSP study shows that more than 60% of people in Denver have access to bikes and use them regularly; majority of those want improvements in infrastructure)

- **Michelle R points out that geometry/geographical constraints create a hard limit for road construction – that it's futile to continually build out roads when density creates pressures for other transportation modes.**

Piep/Jill concur that you can't build yourself out of traffic issues.

- **Ryan H points out that logic and math might not resonate as much with citizens as emotional connection to how better sidewalks in front of their own houses would improve their lives**
- **Alison T brings up Broadway bike path and how that mode of transportation increases retail sales, raises profile of local businesses (because a person on a bicycle has more chances to observe & patronize businesses)**
- **Alison, Andy raise possibility of CPNAC taking a formal issue position supporting this initiative to prioritize bike/ped funding**
- **Andy agrees to draft a position statement that members can review/sign**
- **Hank, Michelle, Alison suggest that the statement should specifically reference City Park and how such funding would facilitate park access**
- **Michelle R describes how her RNO has online voting so that all members (not just Board) can vote on issues before the community**

II. NAC Business

A. New PRAB representative: Brande Micheaux

- PRAB bylaws mandate that committee members live in the district of the councilperson who appointed them
- Andy was appointed by Councilman Brooks but because of redistricting no longer lives in his district and had to be replaced

B. Andy's Role Going Forward

- CPNAC members appreciate everything Andy has done for the group would like him to remain
- Options discussed: create a specific leadership/facilitator non-voting role; form a new RNO; have Andy represent GPHC instead of Ryan; have multiple reps from Park Hill, only one voting
- No final decision made; Andy and Ryan to discuss the GPHC option further

III. Zoo

- Spring Break is this Week
- Gift Shop Remodel is Complete! Come Visit
- The Watering Hole (new adult lecture series) debuts next Wednesday (July 20, October 18 will be next two events in series)
- Lots of new baby animals, come check them out!

IV. DMNS Open House Presentation (March 22nd)

- Two main parts: the Museum's Current State and Its Future Directions

A. Current State

1. Building Changes: Exterior Appearance, Interior Functionality

- Recognizing how important it is to blend in with the Park, DMNS worked with Parks to significantly revamp the South, West, and North sides of the bldg
- Including major landscaping changes, trail connections, public art
- DMNS contributed about \$500k
- May re-do the main entrance
- Inside, a new underground storage facility (climate- and humidity-controlled) now houses about 4 million collection items, which frees up a lot of space in the existing building

2. Bond Issue: Deferred Maintenance, Not New Buildings

- DMNS building (owned by the City) incorporates 10 additions over the last 100 years
- This presents a lot of challenges to the building envelope, especially critical when collections need significant facilities for climate management
- Bond request (approximately \$13 million) reflects monies needed to upgrade infrastructure like air chillers, boilers, air handlers
- These upgrades will save DMNS an estimated \$250k annually in utility costs

3. Parking: Operations, not Infrastructure

- DMNS recognizes the parking challenges - City Park has had parking challenges for as long as Denver's had cars
- Given uncertainty about the future societal role of cars, and the fact that DMNS only has about 60 days when parking is a

major issue, DMNS has taken the decision to manage parking challenges through operations changes rather than new structures. Examples:

- Deals with Lyft, Uber
- Incentives for volunteers and employees to park elsewhere (if at all)
- Rental of East High pkg lot for volunteers and employees, and provision of shuttle from that to Museum
- AMZ gift cards
- Coordination with Parks and the Zoo to avoid double-booking special events

NOTE: there is no truth to the rumors circulating that the Museum is creating new parking structures underground or with the Zoo

In general if you hear rumors about what the Museum is up to, please get in touch with Peggy so she can address those

B. Transcending Physical Boundaries: the "No Walls" Initiative

- DMNS has engaged in aggressive community outreach to come up with new ways to bring the Museum and its collections to people instead of relying on people coming to the Museum.
- Physical components:
 - "Pop-up" mini-exhibits in public parks
 - Temporary transformations of classrooms into mini-museums
 - Dinosaur Gulch play area in Cherry Creek Shopping Ctr
 - Signing partner at the new National Western Complex remodel (will provide science- and nature-based programming)
 - "Magic Mountain": a 1950s-era DMNS archaeological dig was recently discovered via GPR to have previously unknown structures. DMNS will lead a citizen science project actively engaging people in the excavation of these.
- Virtual components:
 - Virtual Science Academy: Live science studio @ DMNS facilitates interaction between off-site students and a DMNS educator
 - Virtual Experiments via Facebook Live: FB Live sites featuring updates and live Q&A sessions with DMNS

- researchers in the field all over the world
- Google's Virtual Museum: DMNS was invited to participate in the Nature and Science exhibit
 - Their efforts to reach people off-site are already paying off:
 - 2013: 7% of their visitors were off-site
 - 2014-2015: 8% of their visitors were off-site
 - 2016: 22% were off-site

All of these are bringing the Museum and its collections to people all over the city, the state and the planet.