



PIERCE COUNTY

Conservation Futures & Open Space Citizens' Advisory Board

March 24, 2022

(Continued from March 17, 2022 Meeting)

CAB Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order by Marcello Mancini, Chair, at 6:04 p.m. virtually via Zoom webinar. A quorum was present.

ROLL CALL:

CAB Members Present: Marcello Mancini, Thomas Ginsburg, Kadie Anderson, Sarah Chun, Lyndsay Gordon, Ryan Hebert, Ethan Newton, Carol Paschal, Jerome O'Leary, Susan Paganelli, Terry Reid, Heather Shadko, Patricia Villa

Staff Present: Kimberly Freeman, Katherine Brooks, Cheryl Saltzman, Rachel DeCordoba

Maul Foster Alongi: Kate Elliott, ZZ Lundburg

CAB Members Absent: Tony Paulson (excused), Brett Larabee (excused), Susan Potter

Special Guests: Matthew Keough, Parks Manager, Gig Harbor
Jennifer Keating, Gig Harbor/Puyallup Tribe of Indians
Mike Behrens, Gig Harbor, Ph.D., PLU (Ecology/Biology)
Lucy Zhou, Gig Harbor Advisory Board/Chinese Reconciliation

MEETING MINUTES:

Motion: To adopt the March 17, 2022 meeting notes as written. The motion was moved (Ginsburg), seconded (Gordon) and passed unanimously (with one abstention, J. O'Leary)

PUBLIC COMMENTS: No public comments.

PRESENTATIONS:

A. Opportunity Account Overview – Kat Brooks

Katherine Brooks provided a brief overview of the Conservation Futures Opportunity Account (CFOA) application for the North Creek Salmon Heritage Site – Phase 3 (NCSHS-P3) and referenced the information had been sent out prior to the meeting, including the application. We tried to make a fillable form, that didn't work well when it came to docu-sign, so that had to be transcribed. We also sent out an environmental assessment, the code language regarding the opportunity account, the staff scoring, and the summary document, which is the CAB's recommendation.

Recap of Opportunity Account: Phase 2 of the North Creek Salmon Heritage Site was approved for \$1,212,000 by Council based on an estimated \$7,000,000 purchase price. The application before you now is the Phase 3 site, and it is for \$500,000 with an estimated \$1,000,000 purchase price. They have matching funds at 50%.

The CFOA beginning balance for 2022: \$1,750,000, and with both Phase 2 and Phase 3 applications, it would leave a total of \$38,000. However, the Phase 2 project didn't appraise as high as expected, so the Executive is recommending the Phase 2 funding award be reduced by \$250,000 and only \$250,000 of CFOA funding be approved, which leaves a balance of \$288,000 in the CFOA fund. There is another possible application coming in for around \$288,000.

Board Questions:

Q-Lyndsay – Would it require one approval, or two, and is it one resolution or two, given that there is an amendment to a previous resolution?

A-Kat – We are looking for a recommendation and a vote from this board on the application that was submitted, and on the draft CAB recommendations table, which states where the money is coming from and then what it equates to. I will have to draft two separate Council resolutions, one on Phase 2 to amend to reduce award amount down by \$250,000, and the second resolution which relates to Phase 3 project. As an example, this happened last year with the Rocky Creek Estuary projects, Squire and Cline, came in below what their estimated purchase price was going to be, and they had some cost savings, and that's how we came back with the Ellis property and did another resolution to take those cost savings and transfer them over to purchase the Ellis property.

Q-Jerome – If this doesn't pass tonight, are the previous approved proposals still in place, or do they get disrupted?

A-Kat – If it doesn't pass, we probably would not be able to amend the other resolution.

Q-Patty - Is there a reason why it can't be a part of the next funding cycle?

A-Kat – This property is under threat of development, so they are working quickly with the seller to make the acquisition before it gets put on the market. I'll leave that to Matthew to go over this in his presentation.

Marcello-Propose to move forward with presentation and hold questions until after.

B. NCSHS-P3 – Matthew Keough, Parks Manager, City of Gig Harbor

Presentation summary – Via PowerPoint presentation, Gig Harbor's Park's Manager gave an overview of the property's location/demographics, program goals, development threat, local/regional plans, and matching funds. Conservation Values: primary is 'preserving vital lands and artifacts of the s^wəbabč peoples;' secondary is 'human and wildlife trails and corridors'; and tertiary is 'conservation of scenic viewpoints and corridors.'

Dr. Behrens spoke about the two most important ecologic issues of the area – a) relatively intact habitat with corridors between parcels for wildlife to move across, and b) the location near the mouth of Donkey Creek, or North Creek – runoff from human-dominated areas has major impact on salmon runs. While the conservation upstream is important for spawning grounds and early life history rearing habitat for salmon, it's also important to protect water in the lower watershed from chemical contamination, from cars and other household sources. This site drains directly into the lowest part of the creek. If it's allowed to be developed, we risk undoing some of the benefits of those upstream locations. It has both benefits from terrestrial wildlife and fisheries side, and the larger project of conservation.

Jennifer Keating spoke about development pressures for the Puyallup Tribe, seeing historical sites destroyed. Often tribal reservations don't have the opportunity to save the lands.

Board Questions:

Q-Jerome – Does this property also lie within the urban growth boundary of the city of Gig Harbor? And 18 single-family homes? Is there funding in place for the trail improvement, or is that something this other non-profit is working towards, and how much have they raised?

A-Matthew – Affirms first two questions, and states that the other non-profit is working towards the conservation of the lands. We are gathering funding for Harborview Drive improvement project, so there is funding going towards that project, and the idea of extending those funds hasn't been extended to this project. We are excited that we could use that trail network and bring people onto this property.

Marcello requests showing slide with three different phases.

Q-Lyndsay – Two questions, which large mammals come through? And if non-profit is not able to secure the funds for the entirety of the match, is there a contingency plan?

A-Matthew – Let me answer your second question – there is no doubt about the funding for the match.

A-Dr. Behrens – To answer your question about large mammals, due to indirect scat observations, deer, coyote, and small populations of bear and probably large cats.

Q-Terry – Regarding multi-purpose trail, is there any long-range plan to connect that section of trail with the multi-purpose trail through Cushman Trail?

A-Matthew – There is a big push and need to connect parts of the community to the harbor. When we talk about the multi-use trail in Harborview its target is to go all the way up Harborview and Burnham to North Gig Harbor, about a mile and a half up 96th street, and that could be connected to Cushman Trail, so the answer is it will happen by this design along Harborview Drive. We're also looking at a Cushman Trail connector trail, which we have design funding for and is depicted on this map.

Q-Terry – But the Phase 1 trail, is a soft surface trail, not a multi-purpose trail.

A-Matthew – Correct.

Q-Susan Paganelli – Regarding earlier question about contingency plan (Lyndsay) was if you didn't get the funding – if you don't get the funding tonight, will you still be able to get the funding for this?

A-Matthew – City Council authorized us to go into an agreement for purchase of this property at one million, with a contingency on a successful conservation futures grant. We briefed Council we would ask for whatever we can, but they understand we are asking for 50%. They have not said they would make up a shortfall. I want to show you a lot of community support and enthusiasm, but I can't say the Council will make up the shortfall. The community is contributing \$50,000. The shifting of the Phase 2 funding to Phase 3 is understandable.

Q-Ethan – Has there been an appraisal yet on this Phase 3 parcel or is there one in the works?

A-Matthew – There has been one, and it came in over the price listed.

Marcello – Any more questions regarding this?

Q-Patty – Is the property directly above Phase 3 set for development?

A-Matthew – The area is largely developed that you can't see because of tree coverage. There's an office building and a housing development.

Marcello – Matthew, thank you for your presentation.

Marcello called for a motion to approve the Phase 3 Opportunity Project. Correct, Kat?

Kat – what we're looking for is a vote on whether you want to approve this request and then those recommendations/conditions that I showed you earlier that will be a companion to the resolution that goes to Council.

Marcello – We will approve the project as presented with the knowledge that the Phase 2 funding will change, and that change will be presented to the Pierce County Council and then also with the Phase 3 proposal as written with the \$500,000 grant. I need a motion to approve the Phase 3 Opportunity project.

Lyndsay Gordon motions to approve the Phase 3 of the North Creek Project in accordance with the Executive Recommendation, Terry Reid seconds. Marcello: Any further discussions or questions?

Jerome – I think this is a great property, love the connectivity, and for the record I'm voting in favor. I do

continue to have challenges with the extinguishing of these development rights, and not being transferred to being used to create densities elsewhere when we're inside urban growth boundaries. The Growth Management Act is specific in saying that they want to have higher densities within areas where there are goods and services. I just think there needs to be some kind of provision in our process that goes to the transfer of development rights or something. In this area, we will be extinguishing 70 development rights. I just want that on the record.

Marcello – A motion has been set forth and seconded. All in favor say aye. No opposed. The project is approved. We will make that recommendation and present to Council in the very near future.

C. Carbon Sequestration and Equity– Rachel DeCordova, Sustainability, Planning and Public Works, Sustainable Resources Department

Rachel DeCordova introduces a carbon sequestration matrix, and provides background on the County's Sustainability 2030 plan, which was passed by Council and signed by the Executive in spring 2021 and is a ten-year plan to with a goal to reduce County's greenhouse emissions by 45% by 2030. There are 77 actions in five different focus areas to help achieve this goal. The goal is 45%, that is assuming a baseline based off 2015, and this summer we'll be receiving updated greenhouse gas emissions data for 2019 to see our progress so far. We will soon see our where we are and what are trajectories are.

This plan contains several goals that related to the Conservation Futures Program:

"In the next update of conservations futures, include carbon sequestration potential as a metric in scoring criteria."

"Define carbon sequestration potential" in code.

"Carbon sequestration potential" means the amount of atmospheric carbon that could be converted to organic matter and stored indefinitely in the soil or biota contained within a land parcel given a change in the land's use or land management practices.

The proposal is to add the following language to **Table 2.97.110-1** of the Conservation Futures Evaluation Categories and Points:

The proposed land use change(s) to the property, as outlined in the Sponsor's application, demonstrate carbon sequestration potential in alignment with County climate goals. (0-5 points)

If there is support for this addition, sustainability staff will be able to provide specifics regarding how, what, and why this would work.

Board Questions:

Q-Lyndsay – Great way to integrate policy issues. The use of the word "indefinitely" in the code language – undetermined or forever? Would like that word revisited as it could be a potential struggle.

A-Rachel – definitely will revisit, meant to be a juxtaposition to a temporary idea, but can see that it could be an issue.

Q-Jerome – Seems very scientific – will there be support for those us of without the background or knowledge in assessing this?

A-Rachel – Short answer is yes. The existing tools for quantifying are not easy to digest. We would make sure all the proper tools are in place.

Q-Thomas – We want to make sure the science is well explained. There may be a place on the TAC for a carbon sequestration advisor in the future.

Q-Carol – Does there need to be language that states we are preventing the loss of carbon storage from

development in this language?

A-Rachel – Such as referencing what the alternatives of what property could or would be used? Definitely can be incorporated.

Q-Lyndsay – Regarding comments as to it being technical – it may be worth exploring while we've gone through criteria that is scored for the CAB, with a formula, and we don't have discretion. Depending on what the thoughts are and how technical, that might be a viable option to just have it be yes/no format. We just make sure it's consistent across projects.

Q-Jerome – Follow up, maybe there's an expert to score this for us and we just incorporate into our criteria so that it doesn't put the burden on us.

A-Rachel – definitely could be an option.

Marcello – it would be interesting from my perspective to take a look at a handful of past projects that we've approved and how it's impacted carbon sequestration to compare and understand.

Q-Susan – Want to make sure we're talking about scoring this, where will burden be on applicants for this? These are fairly big applications, would hate to add one more thing without additional help.

Q-Lyndsay – Agree with idea of not putting carbon accounting issues on applicants on their own. We definitely want to control the technical aspects so that everyone is being scored using the same rubric as field is not standardized at this time.

A-Rachel – Absolutely thinking through all of this.

Equity Assessment

Within the 2030 plan goals, they are applying an equity assessment to external-facing actions (a series of 18 or 19 questions such as who is benefited/burdened by this action? What are alternatives that pose positive/negative equity impacts? What is historical context regarding jurisdiction of specific space?) Before decisions are made, we want to make sure we have all the information, or ability to get that information.

This CF code update is one of the external-facing actions for our plan.

We discussed accessibility of application for applicants. Even the term carbon sequestration is not a widely known term by public at large. Some of our considerations:

- Not creating a barrier/burden to applicants and mitigating who has that burden of calculating sequestration potential, how to make that level?
- Are materials available in multiple languages? Is that useful?
- Is there accessibility of outreach and Q&A sessions?
- Example: Tree giveaways, are they geographically equitable? Urban heat islands?

There is a county-wide equity index being developed, requested by Council, instructing County to create an equity index tool – will look like an updated version of an existing map (shares map) that will be updated later this year and currently contains five indicator categories: livability, accessibility, economy, education, and environmental health. An equity index score will be pulled based on those five categories.

Board Questions:

Q-Jerome – In looking at the map, it appears the populated areas seem to have a relatively good distribution versus the less populated? How was this map put together?

A-Rachel – It does seem to be that geographic pattern like you're describing. In terms of understanding the indicator categories, you can toggle to understand the score better. We are working to identify data sources

and methodologies to update and apply to the County as this was developed by City of Tacoma. Once this is updated, some of these colors may change as it will be more applicable to the County.

Q-Lyndsay – What is the actual data set behind this? Could there have been some expanding/contracting? If you are considering data between different cities/rural, they are definitely not the same – will need a way to compare them as we have projects in both.

A-Rachel – Each of the categories will have a specific data set that it is pulled from. On the City's website, there's a breakdown.

Q-Lyndsay – Department of Health recently rolled out an environmental disparities index whether or not it's appropriate, but is based on census data so it's applicable to both city and rural and is being used by State right now.

Q-Kat – Regarding outward facing projects – are you anticipating doing some kind of assessment on the carbon sequestration being added to the Conservation Futures code?

A-Rachel – Yes, it's internal at this point that allows us to take stock of our data needs and considerations internally before we move forward with first steps. It is something we've begun to compile. As we compile more information, we will be able to refine.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Kat – Will be preparing transmittal letter for your signature with your vote on the NCSHS P3 project. Also want to speak to what Jerome said earlier about these projects in urban areas and taking away density, and your question if there could be transfer of development sites to a receiving site. I know the County has a transfer of development rights (TDR) program and will follow up to see if the City of Gig Harbor has something similar or if there's been any discussions relating to this. This is something we need to look at in the code update. For example, Franz Farms retained some development rights, and it happens with farm projects. It's something for us, Kate and ZZ, to add to our list to bring back to our group to have a deeper conversation about. You are trying to achieve two simultaneous goals: reconciliation of growth management, with conservation and adding carbon sequestration. I appreciate you bring it up, Jerome, and we will need to have a deeper conversation to address that.

Jerome – You may want to reach out to Mike Poteet with the County, he is working on evaluating the current transfer of development rights program. There are some code issues, and whether farm property or not, it's a shame to see development rights disappear because they are coveted and need to be used in the proper areas to meet growth management act.

Any other business? No other business.

Kat – Jerome, the information you brought up about TDR will come back in the next series of CAB meetings.

Q-Lyndsay – What should we be expecting for the next round of meetings/timelines?

A-Kat – We'll give it about a month to finish the outreach process, reach out to sponsors/survey, we wouldn't come back until around the middle of May? (Kate agrees) It will take three or four meetings like we did this time.

Marcello calls for motion to adjourn today's meeting to be adjourned.

Motion: To adjourn today's meeting to was moved (Ginsburg), seconded (O'Leary) and passed unanimously.

MEETING ADJOURNED: The meeting was closed at 7:38 p.m.