



## **Spring Gulch Equestrian Area Plan Public Meeting Notes**

**Thursday, September 4, 2008  
6:00 pm – District Office Building Board Room**

Staff Attendees: Tom Hoby, Bill Dailey, Brian Muller, and Judy Brandmeyer

### **Why did you wait so long to notify homeowners about your plans?**

- The Metro District is still in the planning phase and is currently seeking input from the equestrian groups, homeowners, the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers (USACE), and mountain bikers.

### **Owner / Leasee of the Property**

- The USACE is the owner of the property. It is a storm water detention area to protect Chatfield Reservoir in case of flooding.
- It is currently leased to Colorado State Parks and managed by Chatfield State Park personnel.
- The State has approached the Metro District to be the leasee since we are in closer proximity to monitor activity and open and close the facility.
- The proposed plan is the Metro District's, not the USACE's, or Colorado State Park's.

### **Mountain Bike Skills Area**

- The group expressed concerns about the size of the area and the mountain bike skills area spilling into the equestrian area.

### **Who, specifically, are the equestrian groups the Metro District is in contact with?**

- It was asked why no representatives of equestrian groups were at the meeting. The District set up this public meeting specifically for homeowners input.
- Attendees chose five representatives, three from the east side and two from the south side, to meet with equestrian and USACE representatives, if needed, to resolve fencing issues.

## **Equestrian Event Warm-Up / Starting Area**

- There was some confusion about where the warm-up and starting area is located. Staff will confirm with equestrian group representatives.

## **Equestrian Area Fence**

- The equestrian groups favor a single rail fence over the barbed/smooth wire fence. They say that's enough to keep a horse contained and that a barbed wire fence is dangerous.
- Residents do not want the barbed wire fence on the east to come down because it will allow/attract more use.
- Discussion of why the proposed fence in the northwest corner of the site was so far south. Neighbors suggested it be moved further north of the spillway so they could see horses warm up in this area.

## **Additional Tree Plantings**

- It was asked if trees could be planted at the east end of the Service Center yard to hide the fence and possible cell tower ground equipment. Tom Hoby said that was certainly a possibility, but depends on what underground utilities are in the area.

## **Service Center Yard Lights**

- A resident attendee distributed photos of nighttime lights at the Service Center from their back yard and asked if adjustments could be made to the lighting direction. Tom Hoby said staff could make visits to the homes after dark to see how the lights affect the homeowners.

## **Noted Items:**

- Were we aware that people were using the area for archery practice (shooting rabbits) and fireworks?
- Will we continue with weed control/mowing and prairie dog control? Yes, as a matter of routine maintenance.
- Will this meeting content be posted on the district's web site? Yes, within a week.

## **Metro District Priorities**

- Expansion of the Service Center yard
- Expansion of parking for Shea Stadium
- Trail head for the East – West Regional Trail

## **Next Steps**

- Seek to resolve issues raised by neighbors and report those to neighborhood representatives and the Board.
- Once there is consensus on the issues, the District will proceed with its recreation lease application with the USACE.

## **Residents asked how they could have more influence and be assured their concerns were heard.**

- Tom Hoby indicated that they should write down their comments on the forms provided and return them to the District by September 8, 2008.
- He also indicated residents could attend a future Board meeting to voice their concerns and that written comments would be shared with the Board. He indicated that the next Board meetings are on September 24<sup>th</sup> (study session) and September 30<sup>th</sup>.

## **Attendee List**

- After all attendees agreed that their name, address, phone number and e-mail address could be shared, copies of the sign-in sheets were made and distributed to all attendees.

**Spring Gulch Equestrian Area Plan  
Public Meeting Written Comments by Fax and Email**

**Number in parentheses denotes number of like comments.**

**Mountain Bike Skills Course**

(4) There is concern as to how a bike terrain course will affect the safety of the surrounding neighborhoods, equestrians, horses, native fauna and the dam itself.

(4) Mountain bikes incur significant rutting with their wheel footprint.

(5) Homeowners have doubt as to whether the bikers will stay on the designated bike trail.

(3) There is concern that if this becomes a familiar hangout there could be potential for a fire danger for the surrounding houses if the kids congregate there and smoke cigarettes. The homeowners do not want that kind of element unsupervised in their backyards, which cannot be easily accessed by authority.

(1) A pair of Red Tail Hawks has been nesting in some cottonwood trees on the west side of the dam, near the Santa Fe entrance to the Equestrian Area. The Red Tails likely would relocate away from the area entirely if there are bikers careening around at the base of their trees.

(1) Bikers would disturb the other wildlife that inhabits the open space.

(1) I believe the bike park would be good for the community. Control the bike riding over the dam with fences, signs, and security.

(35 signatures) Opposed to the mountain bike skills course.

**Equestrian Area Fence**

(3) Mountain bikers, pedestrians, kids, dog walkers and the like would be able to access the equestrian park at any point by walking under the single wooden rail at 42-inches high.

(4) Persons accessing the softball fields, Shea Stadium or the strip mall would take shortcuts through the equestrian course.

(3) The barbed wire fence is overgrown with beautiful native fauna and it not only covers the barbed wire fence, but keeps pedestrians and horses away from the fence and also keeps all involved both inside and outside of the equestrian area. If the proposed 42-inch single rail wooden fence were to replace the barbed wire fence, this native fauna would all be ripped out.

(1) I enjoy the current openness to this area and would not like any change.

(1) The equestrian group has approximately 3 large events per year. The area is well controlled and always clean and neat when their events are over. I do not feel a "buffer" is necessary.

(1) Perhaps the equestrian groups could educate riders to not approach the south green of Redstone Park when the ball fields are in use. This would allow full use of all areas during the vast majority of the time when the ball fields are vacant, instead of a fence permanently preventing access to certain areas.

(1) I was surprised by the lack of knowledge about horses at the meeting. Barbed wire fence is very dangerous to horses and riders. I suggest a 2 or 3 strand non-barb wire on wooden posts, or better, a 2 or 3 tier wooden fence. This is the standard all over the world and would raise our property values. Tour high-end horse farms in the Parker area. Notice the million dollar homes around them.

(35 signatures) Opposed to a new fence and additional plantings.

### **Service Center Yard Expansion**

(3) There was some concern about the brightness and location of the camera security lights.

(3) It was suggested that evergreen trees could be planted between the proposed service yard expansion creating a visual block for the equipment in the service yard.

(1) Increasing the size of the service center lot and the Shea Stadium parking does not have any impact on my property, and I agree with your proposal.

(35 signatures) In support of the Service Center yard expansion

### **Expanded Parking at Shea Stadium**

(3) Homeowners stated that this area is still visible to their houses and is not visually behind the dam. The homeowners would not like any additional lighting added.

(35 signatures) In support of additional parking at Shea Stadium as long as there is no additional lighting.

## **Equestrian Event Starting Area**

(1) It was stated that the start of the equestrian course was in the NE corner of the equestrian area at Redstone Park's SE corner. All the homeowners at the meeting stated that in their 10 years of living there, they've hardly seen any horses in that corner, if only rarely and briefly. They also stated that there is rarely a chance for persons in the southeast fields of Redstone Park to encounter a horse and rider there.

## **East-West Regional Trail Trailhead**

(35 signatures) In support of the East/West Regional Trail trailhead.

## **Spring Gulch Pond Improvements**

(35 signatures) Opposed to a fishing pond with pier in the Spring Gulch Equestrian Area.

Note: In a follow-up call to Nancy Levenson, neighborhood representative for the south homeowners, it was clarified that the Spring Gulch Pond Fishing improvements are in a separate parcel of land west of Santa Fe (U.S. 85). Once that was realized by neighbors this opposition statement was rescinded. The neighbors indicated no issues with the Spring Gulch Pond Improvements.

## **Concerns with the Overall Plan**

(1) Residential property was purchased because it faced open space.

(1) Loss of property value due to development of the open space behind home.



**Spring Gulch Equestrian Area Plan  
 Public Meeting  
 September 4, 2008, 6:00 pm**

**Citizen Comments and Evaluation Summary**

**1. What do you like about the Spring Gulch plan presented tonight?**

- We like the plans to extend the trails, parking, storage lot and fishing pond. We are concerned that structures might be built behind our property near the proposed starting area for the horse events.
- Planting native grasses – elimination of the dust and weeds. Parking expansion on the north side adjacent to stadium. East-West Regional Trail.

**2. What do you dislike in the plan and why?**

- Do not like the proposed fence as it would be more visible than present one.
- The horse fence is not required. The bicycle skills area and trails – not compatible with wildlife and horse use.

**3. Do you have any suggestions to improve the plan?**

- Plant only short trees by the Metro storage lot so as not to block our mountain views.
- Continue to charge fee for equestrian use. Wildlife protection and habitat development. Eliminate the horse fence and bicycle area.

**4. Overall how would you rate the Spring Gulch plan? (please circle one)**

1	2	3	4	5
Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Very Good	Excellent
		1	1	

**5. How did we do with tonight's format and presentation? (please circle one)**

1	2	3	4	5
Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Very Good	Excellent
			1	1