

Pikes Peak Bulletin – April 21, 2011

Amphitheater proposed for west end Plans could also include zip line course, concessions

By Jeanne Davant

Tourists and residents could eventually be sliding down a zip line or attending outdoor concerts at the west end of Manitou Avenue if plans by the owners of a 31-acre piece of property come to fruition.

Manitou Springs City Council OK'd revisions to the master plan for the parcel originally approved in 2005. The parcel is on the southwest side of Manitou Avenue adjacent to the west gateway. The original plan anticipated mostly single- and multi-family residential development of the property.

"We were approached by a group wanting to put in an outdoor amphitheater and a business wanting to do outdoor recreation," owner David Walton of UU CAM LLC said. The recreational facility could include a zip line course and concessions.

Planning Director Dan Folke said a master plan is required when multiple uses are proposed for a land parcel, when the owner wants to plat only part of the parcel or when development will be done in phases.

Walton's plan "might be the only master plan we've had," Folke said.

The original master plan proposed a development called The Cottages at West Manitou Springs with about 27 single-family lots and about 24 multi-family units. The parcel is mostly zoned hillside low density residential.

Folke said no changes to the residential part of the plan were proposed at this time.

Walton told the Planning Commission at an April 13 hearing that the original plan primarily anticipated building homes. The proposals for the amphitheater and zip lines, however, sparked his imagination for use of the property, portions of which are quite steep.

Folke said the master plan represents a concept for development of the property and does not grant development rights. The owners will have to get approval for a major development plan, site plan, traffic plan and zoning changes before construction could begin.

"This is a first step required for those things to be considered at a later date," Folke said.

Council voted 5-0 to approve the master plan changes. Councilman Rick Barry recused himself because of a possible financial consideration, and Mayor Pro Tern Aimee Cox was absent.

Although Councilman Michael Gerbig voted for the plan, he said he wanted it to be clear that the changes represent "a completely different vision here. This is a big, major development coming on the west end of town."

Folke agreed that the proposed uses could potentially carry greater impacts than the original plan but said that outdoor activities in a commercial district would require conditional use approval, which would come before Council. A range of factors, including traffic and other impacts on the community, would be considered during the conditional use approval process.

He said the owners had indicated a conditional use application for the zip line project would be filed and could come before the Planning Commission and Council next month.

In other business, Council...

- Approved the Library Board of Trustees' recommendation to continue discussions about joining the Pikes Peak Library District. Librarian Margaret Morris emphasized that community

input would be sought before a final decision would be made on the matter. Council also OK'd amended bylaws for the board and approved a library social networking policy.

- Approved the purchase of a hot water tank for the showers for \$7,194. The tank will be tied into the new, high-efficiency boilers that heat the pool and will replace an old, inefficient water heater.

- Approved a new paint job for the Mesa water storage tank at a cost of \$17,635. Public Works Director Bruno Pothier said the tank is showing rust spots and that the color chosen should make the tank blend better into its surroundings.

- Approved a retirement savings plan for newly hired City Administrator Jack Benson.

- Approved use of a home at 113 Deer Path for short-term vacation rental.

- Proclaimed May as Historic Preservation Month.

- Approved revisions to the Manitou Springs Arts Council's application to display artwork on city property, which must be signed by participating artists.

- Approved a six-month extension to an agreement between the city of Manitou Springs and the Crystal Park Metropolitan District.

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