



DISTRICT PLAN COMMISSION Agenda Packet

Thursday February 23rd, 2023
2:00 p.m.
(Typically fourth Thursday of the month)

COMMISSION MEMBERS

Christy Dowling (Chair)
Michelle Seubert (Vice Chair)
Dennis Tonsager (Secretary)

Alan Hale
Jennifer Council
Mark Humbert
Holly Peterson
Wayne Scott
Dan Rau



brightonco.gov/SplendidValley

Please contact Kate Lesser at klester@brightonco.gov or (303) 655-2059 with questions or if you require special accommodations.

Adams County Parks and Open Space
Conference Room
9755 Henderson Rd.
Brighton, CO 80601

1. Call to Order/Roll Call/Pledge of Allegiance
 2. Approve Minutes from Meeting *Action Item
 3. Public Comment
 4. Staff Updates
- Regular Business:**
5. Elections of Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary.
 6. Interview of Candidates for Brighton appointee.
 7. 2023 Calendar and Meetings
 - In person Meetings
 - Proposed Tours, Topics Speakers and Focus items
 - 2023 HSV Farm Tour Planning.
 8. Announcements, Suggestions, & Comments
 9. Adjournment *Action Item

- Attachment: “The Heroes The Farmers” news article
- Handout: 2023 DPC Information Sheet
 - Handout:2023 Meeting Dates

Link to Zoom meeting: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89431814466>



District Plan Commission Meeting Notes



Type of meeting: Regular

Date: Thursday, January 26, 2023

Location: Hybrid Meeting In-Person and via Zoom at 9755 Henderson Road, Brighton, CO 80601

1. Call to Order/Roll Call/Pledge of Allegiance

Meeting called to order by M. Seubert at 2:16 p.m.

Members present: Ms. Michelle Seubert (Vice Chair), Mr. Dennis Tonsager (Secretary), Mr. Mark Humbert, Mr. Alan Hale, Ms. Jennifer Council, Mr. Wayne Scott, Mr. Dan Rau

Members absent: Ms. Christy Dowling (Chair), Ms. Holly Peterson

Staff present: Ms. Jennifer Tucker (Adams County), Mr. Aaron Clark (Adams County), Mr. Jason Baines (Adams County), Ms. Shannon McDowell (City of Brighton), Mr. Kyle Sylvester (City of Brighton), Ms. Kate Lesser (City of Brighton), Ms. Jordan Kowalenko (City of Brighton)

Public present: Andrew Sword, Linda Young, and Tim Ferrell

2. Approve Minutes from October 27, 2022 Meeting

Mr. Alan Hale moved to approve the minutes as presented from the October 27, 2022 meeting. M. Humbert seconded.

→ Minutes from the October 27, 2022 meeting were unanimously approved as presented.

3. Public Comment

Mr. Tim Ferrell commented on signage that had been damaged near Sable Boulevard. Mr. Tim Ferrell also asked about a timeline for getting more signs out into the community. Mr. Kyle Sylvester responded that the signs will be refortified to ensure that they will be stronger by the sign contractor. Ms. Jennifer Tucker stated that farm owners must prioritize which signs they want their plaques on before they are ordered. Mr. Alan Hale inquired about signage trial colors. My. Kyle Sylvester responded that they would proof them and if they need any changes the sign contractor will be open and responsive to changes.

→ No action.

4. Staff Updates

S. McDowell provided information regarding the City of Brighton's public meetings to discuss multi-modal Transportation Master Plan.

A. Clark stated that a Conservation Easement on the Wagner-Mayhew property is in the draft stages and hopes that by March this process will be concluded.

K. Lesser introduced Ms. Jordan Kowalenko as the new City of Brighton Administrative Assistant. Ms. Kowalenko will be filling Ms. Kate Lesser's roll as she has been promoted.

K. Sylvester provided an article for the Commissioners to read at their leisure based on interviews conducted with Boulder County farmers, citing the similarities from the article to the goals of the Commission.

J. Tucker provided information regarding the feedback received from the Farm to Table event. Ms. Jennifer Tucker stated that the feedback was great and that the event will continue to be an annual event and that the Commission will be tasked to plan again in the future.

→ No action.

5. Appointment of New Commissioners



District Plan Commission Meeting Notes



J. Tucker introduced Mr. Dan Rau as a new member of the DPC as appointed by the county. J. Tucker explained some processes for applicants through Adams County and the need for more applicants at this time. There are a total of three positions from County and two positions from City available currently. S. McDowell explained the City of Brighton applicant processes.

→ No action.

6. Dan Hobbs- Rocky Mtn. Farmers Union

Item tabled as Mr. Hobbs was not in attendance. A. Sword provided information regarding the Veterans to Farmers program that he is involved in.

→ No action.

7. Announcements, Suggestions, & Comments

M. Seubert shared information regard the Bald Eagle festival taking place at Barr Lake.

-A. Hale expressed his desire for the board to continue the preservation of farmland as his term is coming to an end.

J. Tucker extended a thank you to the Commissioners that have served their time and an invitation to join meetings in the future. J. Tucker explained that the farm tour will continue, and City Council requested an invitation.

-S. McDowell provided a summary of the Ball State students' visit.

→ No action.

8. Adjournment

W. Scott moved to adjourn. M. Humbert seconded.

→ Meeting adjourned at 2:57 p.m.

Recorded by: J. Kowalenko

THE HEROES



THE FARMERS



By Thomas Rutherford | Photography by Paul Wedlake, Design by JB Loucks

CULTIVATING LIFE IN OUR COMMUNITIES

The mighty seed. It represents all that is life. A seed becomes sustenance, shelter, and beauty. Each seed when nurtured with care, when cultivated with backbreaking work, can make such an impact on our world. Unfortunately, so much of America's farming has been taken over by monolithic corporations. In the final Yellow Scene Magazine Heroes Series we talk to the hands still working the land - the farmers that are nurturing our soil, our bodies and even our minds.

We spoke to representatives from eight farms and gardens in Boulder County about the most important issues facing farming today, the effect of technology on the industry, their favorite crops, and more. Many of the farms we spoke with are Community Supported Agriculture farms. A CSA farm has a number of community members who buy shares of the season's harvest in advance to help support the farmer and share the risk. In return, they receive produce, often organic, directly from the CSA on a regular basis during the harvest season.

► **KAYAM SHORT RUNS STONEBRIDGE FARM WITH HER PARTNER, JOHN MARTIN.** Opened 31 years ago, they have 75 CSA members, meaning that they are one of the smaller farms we spoke with. This means that they face some of the biggest issues that every farm does, but more acutely. Short told me that the two biggest issues today are climate change and land availability. She told me, "Land is just becoming so very expensive, even in the Midwest. People buy up land and not necessarily for farming. It's hard for younger farmers." She went on to say, "The other thing is just climate change. We have really seen it in our 31 years, a shift in climate, and of course it's always been hard for farmers. You can't control that one thing: weather." She says that climate change has given rise to more extreme weather. She referenced the drought of 2002 and the flood of 2014. Despite these hardships, Kayam speaks of her work with sunshine pouring out between her words. She told me she "just really love[s] growing tomatoes," and it warmed my heart when she did.

► **JASON GRIFFITH FOUNDED ASPEN MOON FARM WITH HIS WIFE, ERIN, IN 2009.** Aspen Moon has around 600 CSA members and is a unique biodynamic farm, which Griffith describes as "tying spiritual science together with farming." This allows them to take a more holistic approach. Griffith said, "[We are] looking at the zodiac sign, and where the moon and moon phases are, and where dif-



From left to right: Liz Napp, Sunflower Farm; Kena and Mark Ollin, Ollin Farms; Catherine Long Claus, Long's Gardens; Wyatt Barnes, Red Wagon Farm; Sharon Padue, Yaya Farm; and John Roberts, Sunflower Farm

WE SPOKE TO REPRESENTATIVES FROM 8 FARMS AND GARDENS IN BOULDER COUNTY ABOUT THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES FACING FARMING TODAY, THE EFFECT OF TECHNOLOGY ON THE INDUSTRY, THEIR FAVORITE CROP, AND MORE.

ferent stars are aligning to figure out if this is a good day to plant a root crop or a fruit crop or break a new field." As a result of this approach, Aspen Moon has moved away from some of the more modern approaches to farming such as measuring pH levels in the soil. Griffith said, "Instead of doing a bunch of soil tests and adding fertilizer to the field to get our numbers right, we're going to plant a cover crop there, and the cover crop and the weeds that grow in that field are going to tell me a better story than any test can." All the soil used at Aspen Moon was created there, the result of past crops then feeding the next generation.

► **SIMILARLY TO ASPEN MOON, KENA AND MARK OLLIN OF OLLIN FARMS** take a very holistic approach to their work. Mark grew up on the farm, and both Ollins made allusions to the idea of personal evolution, growing as the farm does. The Ollins believe in the principle of "food is medicine." They are dedicated to "regenerative, climate-smart agriculture." Mark elaborated on this, saying, "We're trying to figure out how to better grow healthy food but at the same time, sequester carbon, and increase biodiversity, and pollinator habitat."

Mark and Kena's passion is immense — too big not to share. They hold youth education courses on the land and have raised their four daughters

on the farm, hoping to instill the idea of responsible growth in them and, in doing so, teach them to value life itself. We are all growing. We are always evolving.

► **MIKE MUNSON RUNS MUNSON FARMS WITH HIS BROTHER, CHRIS.** The farm has been in their family since 1976. Munson and his brother grew up helping on the farm but left Colorado to pursue other interests. Mike actually pursued a baseball career playing overseas in Japan before returning. In 2001, the brothers returned to help out with the farm as their parents aged. Munson was able to witness the evolution of farming from the '70s to now. One of the biggest changes? "It's the quality of seeds, different hybrids. I'm not talking GMO. This hybrid technique, crossbreeding certain things. The seed and the varieties lend themselves to be more robust, a little bit more drought tolerant, better yields. Sweet corn is what we're really famous for in that particular area." He also spoke about the improvement of equipment, saying, "We're not a small farm, obviously, with 80 acres. We rely on big tractors. [Until 10 years ago] we were working with this old John Deere planter since the late '70s."

► **WYATT BARNES, THE OWNER OF RED WAGON FARM,** one of the largest CSAs we talked to with 550 members, spoke about the difficulties inherent to modern farming. He men-

[104TH NORTH]

NOTABLES

tioned the idealized version of farming: The calm and peaceful nature of planting and growth, working under the vast blue sky in the fresh air. But the reality is that it is hard work. He spoke about the challenges of finding good workers for short periods of time. "We go pretty far for the winter and keep a few key people employed, which is our goal, but we cannot keep the whole staff on. So you're retraining an insane number of people every year, and you can only get to a certain size because it's really limited to what I can do," he explained.

YAYA FARM AND ORCHARD, SUNFLOWER FARM, AND LONG'S GARDENS ARE UNIQUE AMONG THE FARMS WE SPOKE WITH.

YaYa focuses mostly on their orchard, rather than the more traditional crops. I spoke with Sharon Perdue, owner of YaYa. They have 1000 trees on their property. Most of them are apples, but Perdue told me there are 128 varieties, including some plum trees, cherries, and pears. They operate on a "U-Pick It" system. This means that customers come to the orchard and pick what they want. Perdue told me this is one of her favorite aspects of what she does as she gets to meet a wide variety of people and families. She spoke to me about the ever-changing nature of farming,

"Every season has a set of activities. I don't have something that I do 365 days of the year. That is really cool. That is very engaging to me, and I don't get bored. If there is a season or a job that is not my favorite, I know it's going to end, and I just gotta get down the path."

SUNFLOWER FARM IS AN EDUCATIONAL DEMONSTRATION RATHER THAN A PRODUCTION FARM.

Owned by Farmer John Roberts, I spoke with Liz Napp, who runs most of the activities on the farm. She told me that an educational demonstration farm teaches young people about growing their own food in a hands-on way, allowing them to learn where food comes from. Sunflower is also completely tech-free, preferring to teach in the open air. Napp told me with a chuckle, "We have beautiful, licensed school buildings. We try not to use them ... unless it's super, super cold." As the lessons in growing food occur, the kids are also taught philosophy, music, and other subjects meant to get the students thinking about their place in the world and mindfulness. They are an incredible asset to Boulder County.

▶ FINALLY, I SPOKE WITH CATHERINE LONG GATES, OF LONG'S GAR-

DENS. Founded in 1905, they are the oldest farm that we spoke with and are actually a garden renowned for their irises. They are also the only urban farm we spoke with, located right in the middle of Boulder. She reminisced, "My sister and I kept horses. When we were in school, after I got home, I could get on my horse and ride over to my friend's. You don't do that anymore." She went on to say, "Just having the type of neighborhoods around change. Big mansions get built, and people don't have much of a yard. Also, not that Boulder had a lot of diversity ever, but it's less all the time. It seems like our income disparity is growing. So I'm one of the lucky ones that get to stay here and live here. But it's hard for people."

These people are reminders that each of us begins as a seed and is now sprouting, growing gloriously out into the sky, arms stretching out towards the sun, the wind flowing through us. We grow beautifully, a little bent, sometimes broken, but persisting nevertheless. Each day we are nourished by those who cultivate life each day, our farmers. Although the days have grown shorter and colder as the year turns into the next, the sun is still there behind those clouds, waiting for us. It won't be long now. **YS**

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Chris & Ryan Rubeck grew up watching his mother and grandmother make magic in the kitchen, which led to an expansive culinary career. When it came down to leave the big kitchens he opened up Ruby Ru's to provide great big plates of comfort food all with that gourmet touch.

You can still get us at the food truck around town, but if you need Ruby Ru's right now, find us on South Boulder Rd. in Lafayette.

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