



Bluebell Canyon, Skunk Creek & Kings Gulch Open House Public Comments

Date: 10.24.13

Meeting Location & Neighborhood:

New Vista High School cafeteria – Bluebell Canyon, Skunk Creek & Kings Gulch

Number of Attendees: 56

Staff in Attendance:

Susan Richstone	Dave Thacker	Chris Trice	Dean Paschall
Lesli Ellis	LaDonna Eubanks	Annie Noble	Melinda Melton
Jean Gatza	Kurt Bauer	Anna Nord	Allison James
Rella Abernathy	Katie Knapp	Cindy Spence	Douglas Sullivan
Bob Harberg	Bonnie Logan	Margaret Rogers (Populus)	

Purpose of Meeting

The purpose of the open house was to provide an opportunity for the community to see flood extent information that the city has collected, weigh in about the impacts of the recent flooding, and provide comments about where they thought flood waters went in their neighborhood. This was also an opportunity for residents to speak with city staff to get information and assistance with flood recovery and find out the status of public facilities. In addition to the sign in station, there were stations providing the following information:

- Flood Recovery Information
- Flood Mapping Information
(with approximate delineations of recent flooding for review and comment by residents)
- Impacts and status of Transportation Infrastructure
- OSMP Flood Recovery Progress (Opening of Trails and Lifting of Restrictions)
- Energy Smart Information

Summary of Public Comments

There were a few comments clarifying the water flow during the flood. Many people would like follow-up meetings on what the plan is. There were a lot of questions and suggestions about recovery and clean up such as flood bank recovery and stabilization, a better flood warning system in the Bluebell area, another storm drain for Skunk Creek and clean-up for the damage and debris left at Anderson Ditch. People also requested making the maps available online for download.

A link to the map-based summary will be added to this summary and BoulderFloodInfo.net when available. All address-specific comments provided at the meeting will be reflected on the map comments.



General Comments

- **Flood map clarification:**
 - The city flood control west of King's Gulch kept my house safe (300 block of 20th St.). Otherwise, when the water came around the corner I would have had much more in my basement. I am upset for my neighbor whose plot is (was) badly drawn back in the 1950s. It is impossible for the Ditch Co to exercise its rights. They are coming in November to cut down the big trees. My neighbor had to work tonight. – Thanks for the meeting.
 - At 400 block of Sunnyside Lane - We are in the flood zone and have flood insurance. This is due to Skunk Creek running through our property. Skunk Creek never threatened us, but Mariposa St did! It was a river of mud from Chautauqua

to us. We are the only storm drain for the many blocks. The water was too much for the drain and came into our property, flooding two rooms and placing 2' of mud adjacent to the house. Our questions: May homeowners uphill from us block the cross streets? This may have relieved the volume if they had not blocked the streets. Their blockades remained up for days, disallowing traffic flow as well. Thank you.

- Thank you for seeking this information. The map for Bluebell should show the water flow on 17th St between Kings and Bluebell stopping 1/3 of the way down the block to the east of King St.
- The 100/500 year flood plain changed due to structure and trees. This widens the footprint. Shouldn't the plain be protected so that others are not negatively impacted?
- Thanks for info and opportunity to see and talk and listen. At what point will city pressure state government to take responsibility for damages otherwise avoidable but for city not dealing with obvious pressure of flooding at 15th and King heading east?
- **Flood clean-up and recovery:**
 - Prepare a list of improvements that would reduce property damage through their implementation. Target items that attributed to the level of flooding. Use criteria that includes the property damage caused by the flood in the evaluation, not just cost to city to implement the improvement.
 - I thank you for the rapid recovery in our neighborhood. Mariposa and King seemed to me to be cleaned up and even repaved in a very timely manner. I miss some of our favorite trails at Chautauqua, but I'm so appreciative of the rapid work that was done to open many of the trails and I understand that you've done and are doing what can be done. This note is full of "I's," and it's really about you. Thank you.
 - How will the mess left along Anderson Ditch be dealt with? Who is responsible to clean up the mess that was left after the ditch was dredged out? Tree stumps, roots, piles of dirt and rocks were left. Fences were pulled down and not replaced. Is there a plan?
 - The traffic mitigation at Baseline & Grant Place sent water to my house which was a problem. Regarding the dumpsters – when one that was full was removed, an empty one should have immediately been put in its place. When this was not done people just dumped things. The pick up at homes was helpful and I wish I had known that earlier. We carted a lot to the dump when we could have had it picked up in front of our home.

- Nice to find out dredging will occur along Skunk Creek. I was hoping for some input on bank recovery stabilization which doesn't sound like it is even on the horizon.
- We live on Bluebell and we feel that this all could have been avoided if there was some warning system and six cars could have been saved and not ruined.
- Ground water flooding is flooding too. And it costs a lot of money to do mold and asbestos remediation. The cleanup was poorly timed and poorly publicized. When the website said on the second pickup that it would start on Monday, they were in our neighborhood on Friday. Ditches should be marked as flood plain.
- (2000 block of Columbine) The Anderson Ditch Co has an easement along my west property line. The ditch overflowed into my house pushing mud into the kitchen, living room and entry way. The A. Ditch Co, about 20 years ago, put up a wall of flagstone slabs on end, but put no caulking, cement or whatever might seal the wall. The water from the ditch came not only over the "retaining wall," but sprayed muddy water through the uncemented gaps. In order to scoop mud out of the ditch, the Ditch Co took down my fence, all but 2 trees (cutting most 2-3 ft from the ground) and they tell me they will not restore my fence nor take out the stumps.
- **Follow-up meeting desired:**
 - Thanks – helpful – nice to have so much city staff. Please plan on a follow-up in 3 to 5 months as the city planning develops and decisions are about to be made.
 - Open houses useful for correcting city maps of flood extent and houses that suffered damages. Not useful for discussion of why damages occurred, errors of commission and omission and responsibility. Informal information of what city process for addressing damage and optimism for mitigation. Not helpful in terms of hearing citizens' perspectives and frustrations and for explaining what city could do and will do.
- **Miscellaneous:**
 - This was helpful. Will the maps be made available to the public for download?
 - Thank you. This was great information.
 - Nice song and dance. So sorry no changes can take place.

***Full page of comments submitted by two of the attendees:**

The City of Boulder needs to address the following items:

- Debris and erosion directly impacting the flow of water in Skunk Creek which then flows onto residential property.
- Path, width and depth of the river including the sharp curves as well as inconsistent creek bed levels.
 - Water breached the creek banks along at least two curves and flooded residential yards.
 - The level of dirt creates pools and uneven water flow.
- Improvements to the banks of skunk creek to increase flow rates and volume.
 - This would include removal of plant materials in the waterway,
 - repair and maintenance of the creek bank,
 - replacement of disintegrating asphalt riprap with a more impervious material and grading modifications.
- The new grading of the embankment along the bike path.
 - The grading created during the remodel of the bridge across Skunk Creek negatively impacts 3190, 3160, and 3130 E Aurora.
- The grade of the open area directly east of 3190 Aurora (the section which includes the park sign).
 - This area was created in such a manner that water does not flow to the creek, rather it creates a pool. The water backed up into the resident's yard.
- Grade of Aurora Street from 30th Street east to Quinn Street.
 - Water, ice and snow does not distribute east to the gutter into Skunk Creek. Aurora is not graded at the correct angle to allow flow and becomes backed up onto sidewalks, driveways, and yards.
- Repair of damaged sidewalks on E Aurora due to ice and water buildup due to improper drainage into gutter on E Aurora.
- Modifications to the concrete drain pan at the intersection of Quinn Street and Euclid Avenue.

- This drain pan is too flat to provide adequate flow and creates flooding at this roadway intersection onto both streets.

- Removal of temporary silt fences and construction items in the Skunk Creek at Arrowood Park.
 - Residents contacted the Parks & Rec Department prior to the flood with no action by the city. These items are impeding water flow and disintegrating into the creek