

Dear Open Space Board of Trustees,

We are writing to express our grave concerns about the CCG process, in light of a recent meeting on Monday, May 24th between members of the Shanahan Ridge VI HOA and the CCG southern neighborhood representatives, Scott Gordon and alternate, Guy Burgess. The aim of this meeting was to discuss their plan for the southern part of the WTSA. This plan was presented to the CCG on May 3 and posted on the CCG website soon thereafter, both prior to any contact with our HOA or many others in southwest Boulder. To encourage residents to attend this meeting, sixty-four flyers were distributed in advance, one to each household in the HOA, providing the CCG web addresses for the CCG process and the Gordon/Burgess plan. At least thirty-five people turned up for this meeting, many of them motivated to attend by their surprise that there was a CCG process, let alone a plan they needed to consider. People who spoke at this meeting expressed deep dissatisfaction with the plan, on two general grounds.

First, the Gordon/Burgess plan is virtually identical with the CCG mountain bike plan with respect to opening up trails in this area (compare versions on the web). Indeed, the Gordon/Burgess plan differs only in recommending more expansion of biking in the southern West TSA, as well as building a new parking lot in our neighborhood to serve the bike trails. Everyone at the neighborhood meeting, including several mountain bikers, sharply criticized this part of the plan on grounds too familiar to require much rehearsal, e.g., concerns about damage to vegetation and conflict with wildlife, differential speeds of hikers and bikers and safety on the trails, running off other users such as trail hikers and dog walkers who use the trails in very large numbers, parking problems, trash, etc. Condemnation of this part of their plan was strong and unanimous. Second, everyone agreed that by offering something that might just as well have been simply cut and pasted from the mountain-bike proposal, Gordon and Burgess failed to act as neighborhood representatives. In other words, aside from independent objections to the substance of their plan, there were strong objections to its unrepresentative character.

In response, Gordon and Burgess have each disavowed their original plan, but in different ways which only make matters worse. At the neighborhood meeting, Gordon claimed that this was really Burgess's plan and that he, Gordon, would submit a plan much closer in character to those submitted by the northern and central neighborhood representatives (their plans do stick to neighborhood issues). At the June 2nd CCG meeting, Gordon also stressed that he now (finally) understands that neighborhood plans shouldn't include biking plans. Burgess's disavowal has a different character: at the neighborhood meeting he said he was just floating ideas for the sake of stimulating discussion. At the latest CCG meeting, June 2nd, he added that his error was to get ahead of the discussion by introducing too much complexity too early. It is hard to avoid the impression of a different kind of evasion or bait and switch.

Of course, people at the neighborhood meeting were not reacting to the complexity of the Burgess proposal; they understood it well enough and had serious substantive objections to it. They asked Burgess, as their representative, to listen to what they said and to modify his plan accordingly. His response was that his role as representative is not merely to mirror his constituents' views but to represent their common good (as he sees it). According to him, this requires funneling as many Open Space users as possible away from the north and central parts of the West TSA and into the southern part, while simultaneously offering more trash cans, parking lots, and other measures to mitigate the adverse effects that his plan would create for this area. As the thirty-five or so people in the neighborhood tried to make abundantly clear to Burgess, they consider this to be the **antithesis** of neighborhood representation. No doubt Burgess is correct that CCG representatives should strive for large, disinterested, "win-win" solutions and that everyone should be prepared to give up something. Yet if the CCG process also involves compromise and negotiation, Burgess has no bargaining chips for the southern WTSA left. He has already given them all away, unless his aim is to help the mountain bike community.

Recall that when Gordon and some of the other neighborhood representatives were elected, many people called for their removal because it seemed apparent that the Boulder Mountain Bike Alliance flooded certain caucuses, especially the Neighborhood caucus, in order to capture seats for their cause. In Gordon's case, there is the appearance of a conflict of interest, given his former activities as a founder and former President of the Mountain-Bike Alliance, and his present position on the International Bike Alliance (as revealed on Google). This is an objective conflict of roles, which is usually enough to make someone ineligible for such an office, not a matter of Gordon's personal character. Nevertheless, the Board allowed Gordon and others to serve, but under "trust and verify" conditions, in effect putting them on probation. Worries about conflict of interest might have been allayed if Gordon and Burgess hadn't then submitted essentially a mountain biking plan to the CCG on May 3. But if submitting this kind of plan does not count as a failing the "verification" test, then what would count as such a failure, in the Board's estimation?

Several other issues raised at the May 24th neighborhood meeting might be discussed. Gordon presented the results of a survey conducted in the fall, for example. In response, neighbors raised sharp questions about how the survey was conducted, the validity of the questions, how it was publicized (few if any people at the meeting received it), who was encouraged to complete it, its validity given the nature of the "sample," etc. But no doubt more than enough has already been said to explain why the people who attended this meeting felt completely unrepresented and as a result consider the CCG process to be illegitimate.

According to the OSMP Update on CCG Progress for the OSMP Board's meeting on June 9th, Gordon and Burgess are now going to "reshape" their

proposal “to better reflect the full range of neighborhood issues.” Unfortunately, negotiations about trails in this area are now only roughly two CCG meetings away, leaving almost no time for the public to learn about this new plan. In any case, yet another plan is not going to undo the damage. This is because whatever trust Gordon and Burgess might have had or regained has been lost as a result of their May 3rd plan. Many people believe that plan reveals what Gordon and Burgess really think, while a new plan will merely represent some backpedaling in response to intense opposition. A retraction of their original plan is hardly going to change this situation. Even if Gordon and Burgess have in fact acted from the best motives, they have now created a situation in which there are even stronger doubts than before. People who attended the neighborhood meeting on May 24th have no confidence left that either of Gordon or Burgess are actually going to represent them.

In order to correct this situation, we ask the Board to act decisively. At a minimum, this what we ask you to do:

- Revisit the Board’s minutes and attachments on the role of neighborhood representatives and then compare the CCG mountain biking plan with the Gordon/Burgess plan. You will see virtually complete overlap.
- Require that the Gordon/Burgess May 3rd plan to be completely withdrawn.
- Replace the South WTSA representative and alternate
- Slow down the CCG process and require CCG to engage in more outreach, so that the public can actually be informed. Neighborhood representatives should be required to contact all the HOA’s in their area, rather than waiting for the HOA’s to seek them out, as was the case for the Shanahan Ridge VI meeting.

We are asking that this be made a fair process, as it was originally intended to be.

Sincerely,

David Mapel
Jackie Colby
Bob Hinsberger

Shanahan Six residents