

July 11, 2023; revised and updated July 31, 2023

Dear Palmer Lake Planning Commission and Board of Trustees,

The below signed members of the Palmer Lake Parks and Trails Commission are writing about the request from Mark Bickford and Janet Quint, to vacate land that is owned by the Town of Palmer Lake. They bought 2.29 acres on August 7, 2020 and it was their intent to vacate land adjacent to this property. There was miscommunication between them and the realtor so they did not prepare the proper documentation within the 90 day window. The legal description of the land is Parcel Trinity South Sub and it lies adjacent and north of North Monument Creek.

Palmer Lake Parks and Trails Commission requested permission to put an extension of Creekside Trail along the south side of North Monument and Monument Creek from Springs Street bridge to connect to the Elephant Rock property as a park. The Board of Trustees approved this request by Resolution and directed parks to flag the location of the future trail in Town property. All adjoining property owners were notified by letter on April 27th as part of a 30 comment and notification period, including Mr. Bickford and Ms. Quint by mail as they don't live on the property. Mailed by the Town office on April 27th or 28th.

The trail was flagged in early May by Parks Commissioners Kalesti and Wiecks, and a local trail building expert, staying outside of private property and a safe distance from Monument Creek, yet affording future users a safe and relaxing nature walk between Springs Street and the future trail section in Elephant Rock property.

From June 5-8, after the 30 days notification period, Parks hosted training for Volunteers of Colorado and Mile High Youth Corp ~ 40 young adults how to build trails. They spent 4 days moving rocks, trees and debris, and carving out the Creekside East trail extension through the very Town property now is being requested for vacation. This work was provided free of charge and they did an amazing job of trail building. Parks Commissioner Gene Kaleski led several volunteers on multiple dates before June 5th to clear debris in that same area. Hundreds of volunteer hours were accumulated in this so far successful project to create a signature trail connecting Town property. This work was performed on town property with the direction and support of the Town and Board of Trustees.

At our Parks Commission meeting on Tuesday, 13 June, Mr. Bickford and Ms. Quinn came to our meeting and told us they wanted us to move the section of the trail that is in the 50' of Town property they want vacated. The town's criteria for vacation of land and states: "Whereas a portion of the right of way located within the town's corporate limits has not been utilized by the public **and it is not anticipated the right of way will be utilized by the Town for the foreseeable future.**" According to this ordinance, their request for vacation does not fit the criteria as this land is being used and will continue to be used for the public. We also think that they would have difficulty building on the property because of Division of Wildlife protections for the endangered Preble Jumping Mouse, and that much of the area is in the flood plain.

Additionally it was learned on July 12th that there is a sewer line running straight downhill from Vale St. to Greeley Blvd. through the portion of Town property on the west side of the Bickford/Quint property that they would like to have vacated to them. The exposed sewer, due do the heavy persistent rainfall in May and June, line crossing N. Monument Creek and Monument Creek is now in the process of being secured. If this had happened after a successful vacation to the Bickford/Quints the process of securing the line most likely would have incurred additional expense and time to make it safe.

The Parks Commission doesn't support the vacation of any Town property that contains utility easements because of the potential expense and hardship that could result should the Town, or PLSD, need to access a utility housed within the easement.

It is our hope that the town will NOT grant them a vacation of this Town land that has been directed by Resolution for the Parks and Trails Commission to build a trail, which is well underway and completed in some sections.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Members of Palmer Lake Parks and Trails Commission

Reid Wiecks

Cindy Powell

Ande Furrer

Phyllis Head

Mike Pietsch