

Turnbull Creek Land Preservation Committee

February 16, 2026

Video and Agenda Packet

Present: Randy Hartman, Chair Donna Athearn, Vice-Chair Chip Weston, and William Robitzsch. **Absent:** Robert Werner.

New Business

The planned presentation by Robbie Lee from Farnton (Deering Park) was cancelled.

Natural Resource Manager Tony Miller asked for input from the committee regarding revisions he thinks are needed to the currently used Dedication to Public Use and Declaration of Restrictive Covenants for **all** the Turnbull Creek properties. He believes that the language of the covenant is too restrictive regarding land management and public use and is counter to land being zoned conservation when purchased. Lands purchased have different covenants, and he suggests that revised, more flexible language is needed. The city should consider rewriting the covenant language to accommodate the future. He suggests that, within one year of purchase, the proposed covenant include language that there must be a flexible land management plan that is part of the deed.

The process to revise the covenants involves getting input from committee members, review of revised language by the city attorney, and unanimous approval by the City Commission.

Discussion highlighted the benefits of revising the language. It will help to:

- ensure land and fire management to include clearing areas of both invasive species and combustible vegetation,
- develop more public access areas and possibly connect to the ECHO trails,
- encourage community volunteers to assist.

A motion to recommend approval for a revised covenant for all current and future bond properties to the City Commission passed unanimously.

The following properties were discussed regarding purchase, appraisal, or appraisal approval:

- Mr. Miller asked Chris Pappas, who owns parcel 119 behind the old KFC (it's cleared and has a road cut), if he would consider selling to the city. It could serve as a pervious parking lot for the adjacent parcels the city owns and would discourage the illegal dumping that's now occurring.
- The owner of parcel 122 (zoned residential/commercial), located at 101 Linda Rd. and SR44 wants to sell it to the City. It is adjacent to parcel 77 (Minton property). It wasn't identified for the Priority List, but it's prime for development. The city could keep it in conservation or turn it into parking for the Timber Trace/Turnbull Creek corridor. **A motion to recommend approval for two appraisals of parcel 122 to the City Commission passed unanimously.**
- The owner of parcel 108 (7.00 acres), which is located at the end of Paige Avenue, has expressed interest in selling this property to the City. Parcels 93 and 94 and could become a parking lot. **A motion to recommend approval for two appraisals of parcel 108 to the City Commission passed unanimously.**
- Mr. Miller talked with the owners of Sugar Mill Campground and RV Park about buying part of their land for a conservation easement. The owners receive offers frequently from developers. They will consider the city's offer as they want to keep the property in the family.
- Charles King, the owner of parcels 106, 107, 106A which were on the Priority 1 List contacted the city as he wants to sell them. **A motion to recommend approval for two appraisals of parcels 106, 109,**

106A to the City Commission passed unanimously. Note: Member Robitzsch recused himself from voting as the owner of these properties is his uncle.

- Mr. Miller approached the owner of parcel 12 about selling. The owner wants to reside on the property as long as possible. It was agreed that, if he sells the property to the city, he can stay in his home as long as he needs to.
- Member Hartman brought up the small 107A parcel as it's for sale asking \$59,000. The committee agreed to have appraisals done, but there was no official vote.

Mr. Miller gave an update on purchase of the Minton properties 69 and 77, between Old Mission and Jungle Rd. Obtaining these two properties will complete the Turnbull Creek-Timber Trace preservation corridor. The agreed price is \$750,000 for both properties. The City agreed to ask the County to rename Walker Dr. to Walker Rd. and to name something on the property "Ellison" once it's decided how it's to be used. Their lawyer still has some questions before they sign, which is not unusual. Mr. Miller added that ER access to the property is being worked on.

There is approximately \$5.5 mil. Remaining of the \$15 mil. bond.

Committee Comment Highlights

Member Robitzsch shared architect Kevin Spicer's ideas for ecotourism on parcels 69 and 77. The plan features a treehouse for glamping and elevated boardwalks that would be low-impact environmentally and raise money for the city. Chair Athearn suggested adding a zipline as well.

VC Weston stated that if another bond were approved, we would want it to include public, private, and municipal involvement. Mr. Miller added that the city has been approached to set up a private foundation i.e. Friends of... that would make it easier for those wishing to make contributions.

Chair Athearn asked about working with the city's chief information officer, Phil Veski, to inform the community of the committee's work so far. She would like to see press in the local news media on the committee's progress. Mr. Miller said that was his plan when the Minton property sale is completed as the TC land corridor would be completed. Previously, it was suggested that signage be erected at each purchased property saying: "*Your bond issue at work*" with maps. Mr. Miller is currently working on a website for natural resources that would show the properties purchased, their use and the city's progress in preserving Turnbull Creek.