

From: [The Golden Hoof](#)
To: [Moline, Jeffrey](#)
Cc: [Oeth, Amy](#); [Card, Adrian](#)
Subject: Ag policy review
Date: Saturday, December 16, 2017 11:33:37 AM

Jeff-

It was nice to meet you at the Soil Revolution Conference. Alice and I plan to attend the public meeting on the 18th, as well as submit comments through the web form. We approach this meeting with some skepticism as to the likely receptiveness of the County toward the kinds of changes that we believe could make a meaningful difference for local farmers. Historically it seems as if the County is looking for tweaks when a major overhaul may be the only remedy.

We will contend that the major hurdles are economic and the collective regulatory oversight and compliance structure originating from both the Federal and State regulations/policies (which were primarily designed to reign in the industrial food system and do not scale down to the small farmer aspiring to make a livelihood creating agricultural products for local consumption), and also from local land use requirements - which largely do not allow for the processing and sale of farm products grown/created on a local farm through direct-to-consumer transactions. The overall result is one of regulatory prohibition.

Wyoming and now North Dakota have ratified State level Food Freedom Legislation aimed at rectifying this situation and we ultimately think that nothing short of this type of solution will work, however Boulder County has layered other harmful land use prohibitions on top of these which even with state wide food freedom legislation would likely still be problematic. Please read the attached article from the Small Farmer's Journal that does a better job that I could in presenting this new paradigm and what is being done in other places -

<https://smallfarmersjournal.com/food-freedom/>

Our point is that if your intention is to release a successful local food movement what you are looking for will need a new point of view, which you might call 'New Ruralism' - a view point that is not outrightly opposed to rural home occupation type solutions that put retail dollars in the pockets of local producers for direct to consumer transactions. These retail transactions need to be broadened to include value-added processing and agri-tainment/tourism options without zoning and oversight structures that effectively stifle these scale-appropriate enterprises (e.g. multiple primary use or commercial designations).

We believe that an effective overhaul of County Ag policies would change the types of limiting thresholds which qualify exemptions for producers. Production exemptions should not to be based so much on type, quantity, or frequency of producer activity, as they currently are, but instead could follow the Food Freedom model to be based both on direct-to-consumer transactions (which are inherently less problematic in part due to their transparency) and also on the extent to which the economic activity is derived from local or on-site production of agricultural ingredients - which both adds a self-limiting element for such exemptions and encourages the types of production that I believe we are wanting to see increase. It is not a small point that such locally derived new wealth in the local community has a positive multiplier effect economically as opposed to debt based wealth creation which has a zero sum game effect.

We will reserve our specific comments on Land Use policy for another communication, but wanted to try to begin to build some level of common understanding of what some of the big picture obstacles really are. I ultimately think that this conversation should be done in dialogue and would welcome the opportunity to speak at length with any of you on this topic as this process moves forward.

Sincerely,

Karel Starek
The Golden Hoof

From: BCHA [mailto:suzannewebel@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, January 11, 2018 4:50 PM
To: Moline, Jeffrey
Subject: Ag Plan informal comments

Hi Jeff

Am planning on attending both the Prairie Dog meeting and the Ag Plan meeting next week (if you think that's a lot, there were also three important OSMP meetings this week and I -- a wonk -- am overwhelmed. It's really not fair to the public!)

As you (may) know, many years ago I was very involved with the Land Use Department in a significant re-write of the Land Use Code regarding horsekeeping issues (zoning, definition of equestrian center, uses by right, and more). For the most part, we believe that the resulting sections have enabled most equestrian facilities to survive while giving the Land Use Department guidelines to work from regarding future equestrian uses.

I have not submitted comments to the current Ag Plan web page because I want to learn more about the issues before doing so.

However, as you can probably guess, the issues I would like to see addressed include:

- + expanding the definition of agriculture to include horses, not just the production of food and fiber for human consumption;

- + expanding agritourism to include equestrian uses such as boarding facilities, possibly horse shows, and B&B's that cater to horses and their people;

- * encouraging agritourism (with and without horses) by developing and supporting an attractive and consistent signage program so the public and the agritourism venues can connect; and

- + supporting the possibility of allowing/encouraging public access to ag lands so the public can gain a better appreciation for agriculture.

There may be others, including water rights and water consumption, and a discussion of how far it is appropriate to subsidize one farmer's agriculture on another taxpayer's dollars. I hope we will have the opportunity to comment further after next week's open house.

Thanks.

Suzanne

From: [William Chapman](#)
To: [Oeth, Amy](#)
Subject: Boulder County Land use issues:
Date: Thursday, January 11, 2018 5:13:05 PM

Hello,

Boulder County does not need to be the owner of open space land! 75% of the land in Boulder County, is owned by Boulder County, the State of Colorado and the Federal Government. Only, appropriately 25% is owned by private citizens! Private citizens are the only ones paying taxes!

William Chapman

From: [French, Kacey](#)
To: [Oeth, Amy](#)
Cc: [Moline, Jeffrey](#); [Kolb, Lauren](#)
Subject: input on agricultural land use issues
Date: Friday, January 12, 2018 1:38:51 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[OSMP Comments BoCo Ag Land Use Regs.docx](#)

Hi Amy,

Please find attached input from City of Boulder, OSMP. We look forward to exploring ag. related land use issues with you in the future, and are excited to participate in this process. Thank you for the opportunity.

Please let us know if you have any questions or how we can assist further.

-Kacey

Kacey French
Planner I



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Open Space & Mountain Parks

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City of Boulder
Open Space and Mountain Parks

P.O. Box 791, Boulder, CO 80306; 303-441-3440

MEMORANDUM

To: Amy Oeth Planner II, Boulder County Land Use Department

From: Kacey French, Planner I
Lauren Kolb, Agricultural Resource Specialist

Date: 1/30/2018

Re: Input on agricultural land use issues

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input regarding the current Land Use Code and other regulations that affect agricultural operations. One of the open space purposes in the City of Boulder's charter is the preservation of agricultural uses and land suitable for agricultural production. The City of Boulder, Open Space and Mountain Parks (OSMP) leases almost 15,000 acres of land to local farmers and ranchers in support of their operations, almost all of which is in unincorporated Boulder County.

In July 2017, the city approved the OSMP Agricultural Resources Management Plan (Ag Plan). Several of the goals and objectives identified in the Ag Plan are directly related to the Boulder County Land Use Code, and the city's ability to advance the some of the direction provided in the plan relies in part, on the foundational land use regulations. The topics the Ag Plan addresses that most interface with Boulder County Land Use regulations are direct sales, agritourism, farm worker housing, agricultural structures, and technical trainings.

Direct Sales and Agritourism

With community interest in "keeping it local" and increased demand for local foods and agricultural products some OSMP lessees expressed interest through the Ag Plan process in having more opportunities to connect with the local community and for a greater diversity of direct on-site sales and off-site opportunities for sales to local markets. Selling directly to local markets provides opportunities for agricultural producers to diversify their income and may increase the resiliency and success rates for local agricultural producers. Concurrently, the community, through a questionnaire, expressed a desire to connect more with local agricultural producers through direct sales and other agricultural related activities. To this end the Ag Plan includes the following recommendations:

- Support and create opportunities for direct sales on-site and off-site
- Evaluate the suitability of other agriculturally related enterprises/activities on OSMP. This includes activities such as farms stands, seasonal markets, agritourism (pumpkin

patches, u-pick activities, petting zoos, hay rides), farm events such as farm to table dinners and family events, demonstration farms, community gardens and food forests. Because these activities are new to OSMP lands, the plan recommends phasing in new activities as pilot projects according to lessee interest and site and land use code compatibility.

Through the Ag Plan process and OSMP lessee interactions we have heard the land use code regulations pertaining to farm stands is complicated and clarification/simplification of the regulations and processes would be beneficial. OSMP has also heard the current land use regulations pertaining to agriculturally related enterprises/activities do not allow enough flexibility to create viable enterprises/opportunities.

Farm worker housing

The lack of qualified labor, particularly for organic vegetable operations, is a limitation and challenge. Real estate prices and the lack of affordable rental properties make housing a challenge for farm workers and impact farm labor availability. The Ag Plan recommended examining the feasibility of providing additional farm worker and lessee housing. OSMP is interested in exploring how revisions to the land use code might address this issue.

Structures

The interest in diversifying the types of agricultural operations on OSMP lands (increased interest in diversified vegetable farms) has been accompanied by a growing interest in additional agricultural structures being permitted, especially greenhouses and hoopouses. Through the Ag Plan process and OSMP lessee interactions we have heard the permitting process for temporary agricultural structures such as hoopouses is complicated and unclear and that both clarification and simplification of the regulations and processes pertaining to temporary agricultural structures would be beneficial.

Technical Trainings

One of the most well-known and concerning trends in American agriculture is the aging farmer. According to the United States Department of Agriculture, 2012 Census of Agriculture, the average age of Boulder County farmers increased to 61 and there appear to be fewer people who want to fill their boots. Among City of Boulder agricultural leases, the current average lessee age is now 67. The Ag Plan recommends providing or improving information and resources to support local and aspiring agricultural operators, and examining the feasibility of providing additional resources such as technical advice/agronomy services. OSMP is interested in jointly exploring training opportunities on topics relevant to the Boulder County regulations including trainings for producers on topics such as safe food handling, good agricultural practices, labor laws, and other local regulations applicable to agriculture in Boulder County.

Prairie Dog Occupation

Irrigated parcels with associated water rights are OSMP's best opportunities to support agricultural activities and make up approximately 20 percent of OSMP land. In 2015, 315 acres of irrigated agricultural lands were occupied by prairie dogs, thereby reducing agricultural productivity. OSMP is interested in exploring if/how revisions to the land use code might address the productivity of irrigated agricultural lands.

We look forward to exploring these issues and their interface with the current Land Use Code with you in the future, and are excited to participate in this process. Please let us know if you have any questions or how we can assist further.

From: [Nelson Bonestroo](#)
To: [Card, Adrian](#); [Moline, Jeffrey](#); [Oeth, Amy](#)
Subject: Open Space soil improvement
Date: Tuesday, January 16, 2018 11:45:14 AM

Hello Amy, Jeff, and Adrian,

My name is Nelson Bonestroo. I write to you as a long time resident of rural Boulder County and a person with interests in the agricultural and recreational future of our area. I appreciate the work the county does to protect and improve our lands.

At the end of last year I was involved with a technology competition focused on food startups. I was a part of a great team full of extraordinary and intelligent people conscientious in many ways. The product we came up with was a vegan lentil snack food that was non gmo and protein and fiber rich. We sold it as something good for you and the environment. They were really quite tasty.

We won the competition. Third place, actually. It was enough to get some interest in us as a team and this as a going concern. We have meetings set up to discuss go to market strategies and financing, production and distribution. As a team, we know this could be a thing.

Currently the local infrastructure and crop yields of the area are not conducive to our specific project. We must go to Montana or Washington for our domestic raw material, or to Canada for real tonnage. But that is for our lentil thing and its scaling possibilities. We can do what we did to any pulse.

I know that Boulder County can grow a tasty bean. As one of the aims of the county going forward is to increase soil fertility, the nitrogen fixing ability of legumes will be an important tool. My team and I would be interested in a local supply of a unique pulse we can build a market for.

I write hoping to be part of solutions. I also write with an open mind as to how to arrive at those solutions. We are a private team with public interests intent on collaboration. How can we help you? How can we help our community? How can we make not the most but the best of our shared open space?

I look forward to Thursday's Q&A. I'm sure it will inspire more questions.

Thank you for your thoughts and consideration.

Best,

Nelson Bonestroo

From: James Burrus [mailto:jimbodacious@gmail.com]

Sent: Friday, January 19, 2018 9:06 AM

To: Card, Adrian

Subject: Re: [Boco_small_farms] Boulder County seeks public input on agricultural land use issues

Adrian.

Thanks to you and whomever else put on the open house last night. It was great to get to speak with a variety of county officials in one room at one time and share thoughts and ideas and questions about AG related issues. Well done!

I also wanted to reiterate my interest and concerns regarding neonicotinoid treated crops, like corn, that is grown on county open space land. This has had a negative impact on me and my honeybees. I'm also interested in food processing at my farm and issues surrounding housing and having a farmhand live on the property to help out with chores, etc.

Please let me know how to stay informed about the issues discussed last night. I signed in with my email, so there's that. But let me know where else I should keep an eye out for further action and information on the above issues.

Thanks again for an excellent event.

Sincerely,
Jim Burrus

--

9108 N. 119th St.

Longmont, CO 80501

home/cell: 720-982-6222

From: Philip Taylor [mailto:philip@madagriculture.org]

Sent: Saturday, January 20, 2018 9:34 AM

To: Card, Adrian

Cc: Oeth, Amy; Moline, Jeffrey

Subject: Re: Update: Farm Forum 4. Raise your Voice on Boulder County Land Use Policy

Hi Adrian, Amy and Jeff,

The other night was absolutely fantastic! I was blown away by the setup and openness to listen and learn. The facilitation in each group was great. I want to commend you all on creating a superb container for conversation. I know the farming community came away with lots of optimism and gratitude for the process. Excellent job. Obviously, next steps are on everyone's mind. You have lots to distill!

Perennially,
Phil

Founder. www.madagriculture.org

From: [Lane, Eric](#)
To: [Oeth, Amy](#)
Subject: FW: Our Farms, Our Future Conference: Supply Chains Key to Sustainability
Date: Sunday, January 21, 2018 2:25:39 PM
Attachments: [en.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)
[image007.png](#)

Please add this to the public comments for the ag land use code exploration.

From: Rich Andrews [<mailto:Rich@zeoionix.com>]
Sent: Sunday, January 21, 2018 7:48 AM
To: Cooper, Blake; Lane, Eric
Subject: FW: Our Farms, Our Future Conference: Supply Chains Key to Sustainability

Blake, Eric,
See below message from SARE and NCAT/ATTRA.

The marketing connection is a key to achieving stronger and fully pervasive organic/regenerative agriculture in our county. This can mean farmer relationships direct with retail consumers in various modes, as well as wholesale to distributors and processors. And the geographically closer from farm to buyer, the better for all and our environment. I suspect you heard that theme the other night at the open house and in comments received. The County has made forays into this area of farm processing and marketing in the past, but without consistency or earnestness, to assist moving to a higher level of truly sustainable ag locally. Using some of the potential of the County Fairgrounds for food processing could be one possible remedy...as well as encouraging restoration of some of the lost food processing in our county. And true agricultural sustainability is really organic ag, as chemical farming simply does not qualify due to its effects on soil health, occupational health and health of the consumers.

Rules/programs to encourage and not disallow on farm processing and local cooperatives among farmers and processors is a fundamental need locally. Current county (land use) rules work in opposition to these things, or make them difficult, or make them happen undecover. An example is the prohibition of a farmer processing crops on farm or from other farmers in various ag allowable zonings such as rural residential, apparently an attempt by the county to push all processing into industrial or commercial zoning categories. Technically it is likely that I cannot legally provide such services as mechanized picking and solar drying and packaging to other hop and herb growers. This kind of inhibition of efficient cooperative agriculture needs to be changed, loosened up.

Rich Andrews
Local environmental scientist and organic farmer
303 918 8297
rich@zeoionix.com

From: SARE [<mailto:sare@sare.org>]
Sent: Saturday, January 20, 2018 12:46 AM

To: Richard Andrews

Subject: Our Farms, Our Future Conference: Supply Chains Key to Sustainability



Our Farms, Our Future Conference: Supply Chains Key to Sustainability

What's your vision for the future of sustainable agriculture? Strong alliances between farmers and food processors are critical to meeting growing consumer demand for sustainably produced products. Beth Robertson-Martin is one person making that happen: She is forming relationships with farmers, suppliers and manufacturers to create new market opportunities that break down the barriers to improved food system sustainability.

Join Robertson-Martin and hundreds of our nation's leading farmers, ranchers, researchers, educators, and food industry representatives at the [Our Farms, Our Future Conference](#) in St. Louis on April 3-5 to explore a wide range of innovative, sustainable solutions to agriculture's most pressing dilemmas.

Please join us! Register now.

Born into a Missouri farming family, Beth Robertson-Martin leads the organic and sustainable sourcing group at General Mills, developing profitable supply chain partnerships that promote environmentally and socially responsible practices. The goal? To deliver high quality, cost effective and sustainably sourced materials that support General Mills' goals to reduce emissions, improve the health of key watersheds, respect human rights and improve animal welfare.



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April 3-5, 2018
St. Louis
[Register now!](#)
Early bird discount
ends Feb. 22

Spread the word!
<http://ofof.sare.org/>
[#OurFarmsOurFuture](#)
[#OFOF2018](#)



Beth Robertson-Martin

The [Our Farms, Our Future Conference](#) will address major food sustainability trends with presentations by a diverse group of speakers who represent unique links in our sustainable agriculture supply chain. Robertson-Martin and dozens of workshop presenters will share their stories about how diverse approaches to agriculture contribute to a more sustainable future.

Hosted by the [Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education \(SARE\)](#) program and the [National Center for Appropriate Technology \(NCAT/ATTRA\)](#), the conference will feature [plenary sessions](#) and [workshops](#) for grain, livestock and specialty crop producers, as well as material relevant to researchers, educators, agency leaders and nonprofit representatives. [Eight farm tours](#) will feature sustainable models of rural and urban agricultural production within the vibrant St. Louis food system.

Register today to save your spot and receive early registration discounts. Early registration ends on February 22. For more information, visit <https://ofof.sare.org/>.



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