



CHERRY HILLS LAND PRESERVE

September 14, 2021

DELIVERED ELECTRONICALLY

City of Cherry Hills Village
2450 East Quincy Avenue
Cherry Hills Village, CO 80113

To the Attention of:
Mayor Russell Stewart
Councilor Al Blum
Councilor Katy Brown
Councilor Mike Gallagher
Councilor Afshin Safavi
Councilor Dan Sheldon
Councilor Randy Weil
City Manager Chris Cramer
Deputy City Manager/Director of Public Works, Jay Goldie
Parks & Recreation Coordinator, Emily Black

Dear Mayor, Councilors, and Staff:

Much has been discussed, debated, and discovered about Quincy Farm (“QF”) during the past two months. On behalf of Cherry Hills Land Preserve (“CHLP”) and the whole community, we truly appreciate the time you have invested. We are particularly grateful for responses from staff and Council to our many questions and for the opportunity to express our thoughts and beliefs.

Almost six years have lapsed since Cat Anderson passed away and yet the path forward for QF is not yet envisioned. We believe deeply that the pieces are now in place to make Cat’s dream come true. This supplement to our proposal addresses this belief.

- **The Citizens of Cherry Hills Village (“CHV”) Want to Save, Experience, and Enjoy their Farm.** Our count to date is that over 138 citizens have recorded their support with the City, and 325 people have signed a petition in support of QF.
- **Call to Action.** It has been suggested that our citizens need to express more specific thoughts about their vision for the farm. To us, this would be putting the cart before the horse. Except for our nature and conservation programs on the farm, the people of CHV have had no access to the farm during the past 14 years. Commitment to, interest in, and vision for the farm start with access to, and enjoyment of, the farm. Commitment, interest, and vision do not develop in a vacuum. They arise from experience.
- **Operation Triage.** As stated at the August 31 Council Meeting, Katie Agron, Linda Behr, Eric Jamrich, and Goca Weis passionately said, it’s time to address the condition of the farm. We propose that the City designate CHLP the team leader for a community triage effort. There

are volunteers in the community, both CHLP members and others, who are ready to roll up their sleeves and improve the condition of the farm. We understand the City has plans to mow and weed. Nonetheless, we urge you to act now to authorize CHLP to lead Operation Triage to supplement work the City plans to do in the near future.

- **Access Now.** Dr. James Crapo, who spoke at the August 31 Council meeting in support of the city retaining title, wants to know why he can't just walk around and get the feel of the East Side of the farm. Dr. Crapo is asking the right question.

A lot has been said about the restrictions of the Conservation Easement, and there is more to do on this subject. But the bottom-line is that the Conservation Easement says in plain English that:

“Grantor (CHV) may permit public access to the Property on such terms and conditions as it deems appropriate provided that such access is not inconsistent with the preservation and protection of the Conservation Values of the Property (para. 6. F., page 11) “[Conservation Values expressly include recreation.]

Contrary to the pattern of thought that has developed, the Conservation Easement does not speak in terms of what the City cannot do. It says the City can do anything that is consistent with these values.

It is time to open the farm to public access. We propose that you deputize CHLP to manage the process as need be with Colorado Open Lands (“COL”) to open the farm to the citizens of CHV, whatever this entails. If need be, CHLP will staff opening and closing procedures and accommodate what reasonable restrictions there might be. The point is that contact and enjoyment has been too long delayed. As the Conservation Easement explicitly states, the East Side can be “used [for] bird watching, hiking, horseback riding, and cross-country skiing.” (para 5 B, page 9). There is nothing in the Conservation Easement that says that the City needs COL’s permission to allow Dr. Crapo to do any of these activities.

- **Expense of Access and Use:** Use of the property and maintenance and preservation of the structures of QF are two separate things. As our past QF programs have demonstrated, the property can be used within the purview of Conservation Values at a minimum cost.

We have been fortunate to have the leadership and guidance of many in the community, including Dr. Harold Skramstad. Before coming to Colorado, Dr. Skramstad had a long career guiding nonprofits such as the Smithsonian and Henry Ford Museum, and was recognized for his achievements by President George H.W. Bush, President Bill Clinton, and President George W. Bush. In consulting with us on Quincy Farm, Dr. Skramstad urged us not to let facilities drive uses. Uses should drive what facilities are provided. Simply stated, you don’t need the Taj Mahal to accommodate the kinds of uses Cat envisioned at QF. Fortunately, the Conservation Easement specifically provides that the City need not maintain any of the existing structures except the Hopkins House and to some extent the Big Barn.

- **CHLP’s Initial Proposal.** We have before the Council a proposal for a simple farm-like campus on the 3.5 acres of the East Side of Quincy Farm and expanded nature education programs on the West Side. This is a natural expansion of the QF programs we have been doing all summer and a perfect fit for Cat’s dream reflected in her 2010 statement that she wanted “children to come out here and learn about nature.” (Video, “A Gift of Land”).

We are flexible about what kind of arrangement the City might want to have with us. Although we mention a lease in our original proposal, we are not set on any certain structure for our relationship

with the City. Fundamentally, we want to collaborate in any way that serves the interests of our fellow citizens.

We are prepared to launch the programmatic parts of the East Side project in the spring of 2022. As has been well documented, there is much work to do on this site. We have offered to start soil restoration for the farm this fall. We are committing to you now that we will launch **at our expense** a farm-like experience on the East Side of the farm and expand our programs on the West Side to the extent possible by next May. Our message here is that we are here to help in any way we can, and we take very seriously the need to open the farm to the citizens as soon as possible. As described in our initial proposal, our budget for launching and operating this project for the first three years is approximately \$650,000. We have commitments for 40% of these funds contingent on CHLP being chosen to move forward with the City. By way of explanation and not excuse, we note that it is extremely difficult to raise funds for a project that is yet to be defined and a role not yet acquired.

- **Long Term Financial Health of Quincy Farm.** What we set out in our original proposal is the **beginning steps** for the future of the farm. We have responded to our fellow citizens plea for the process to begin. Clearly, there are significant financial needs to be addressed. We know that funding for QF will need to come from multiple sources, including City funds, private donors, foundations, quasi-governmental entities, and other public sources. Success will depend on many factors including good teamwork by all those involved.

We note, however, that CHLP is an integral part of this community where there are an exceptionally large number of people of means. We cannot solve the financial challenge of QF singlehandedly, but we can be part of the team. We have resources at hand to commit to the long-term financial health of QF, including:

- 501(c)(3) Status: We have 501(c)(3) IRS status and a restricted fund for Quincy Farm which allows donors to make charitable contributions of either cash or appreciated stock.
- Grant-Writing Capacity: We have identified two outstanding grant writers who are available to research and begin fundraising for QF as soon as our relationship with the City is defined.
- Board Leadership and Relationships: We will continue to strengthen and expand our Board to fulfill that role and facilitate community engagement, partnerships, and solutions.
- Community Fundraising: We have secured some preliminary funding commitments for Quincy Farm, but cannot proceed until the City makes some decisions about our role.

In summary, the future of QF cannot be envisioned in one fell swoop, not in a single action and not by a single actor. We have many citizens behind our efforts and can build the community team to move this forward. The people's message, however, is clear: the process must start. CHLP is positioned and committed to help make this happen, one step at a time. We look to you to let us know how we can help and when we can begin!

We look forward to seeing you on September 21st.

Sincerely,

The Cherry Hills Land Preserve Board
by Anne (Janney) Carpenter, Board President