

Meeting Minutes for Broadband Community Interest Meeting #3

March 9, 2020
Mountain View Lakes Community Building
12798 Parker Ave Pine, CO

Meeting called by:

Diana Link, Mountain View Lakes

Committee Members in Attendance:

Bev Long, Elk Falls Ranch
Lara Reinoehl, Woodside 5,6
Matt Fontaine, Woodside 1
Diana Link, Mountain View Lakes
David Shipley, VP South Park Telephone
Mike Brazell, Committee Guest, Park Co. Commissioner

Committee Members not in Attendance:

Renaë Braun, Elk Falls Ranch
John Carr, Elk Falls Ranch
Laura Nesbitt, Elk falls Ranch
Zach Taylor, Staunton State Park
Mary Ruth Schoen, Woodside 2,3,4

Guests in Attendance:

Mountain View Lakes:

Michael LeFever
Lee Willis
Greg Dugan
Anthony LaMorte
Debbie Wilkes
Ron Bich
John Dolan

Woodside 5,6:

JW Boyle
Doug Windemuller
Jim Sapp
Jim Yarnold
Julie Yarnold
Briggs Cunningham

Woodside 1:

Bruce Bohne
Brian Berordim

Woodside 2,3,4:

Bob Banks
Dan Nolta
Loran Serber
John Goggin
Robert Zimmerman
Robert Herz
John Dolan
Mike Newport
Jim Livingston

Elk Falls Ranch:

Peter Zeeb
Mike Long
Orion Madsen
Dave Dimeo
John Vimont
Bob Wallace

Preserve at Pine Meadows:

Richard George

Call to Order

A broadband community interest meeting was held on March 9, 2020 at the Mountain View Lakes community building. The meeting began at 7:06 pm and was presided over by Bev Long with Diana Link recording meeting minutes.

Bev provided background information on the project and introduced Committee Members. She briefly discussed the purpose of the Engineering and Feasibility Study.

Each neighborhood reviewed their respective stats on the interest surveys:

Interest Survey Results:

Bev reported that EFR received 67 completed surveys, 40% of total properties.

- 60 of those want high speed internet
- Rise is the predominant current provider with 40 residences
- 49 people want to be able to work at home
- 32 people would like speeds as high as 100 MBPS
- Only 8 residents had speeds greater than 25 MBPS on speed tests

Bev reported that S. Elk Creek Road received 4 completed surveys, 33% of total properties.

- 4 of those want high speed internet
- Century Link is the predominant current provider with 3 residences
- 3 people want to be able to work at home
- 2 people would like speeds as high as 100 MBPS
- Only 1 resident had speeds greater than 25 MBPS on speed tests

Diana reported that MVL received 33 surveys, 21% of total dwellings

- 31 would like high speed internet
- Century Link is the predominant current provider with 17 residences
- 25 people would like to be able to work at home
- 14 people would like speeds as high as 100 MBPS
- Only 5 residents had speeds greater than 25 MBPS on speed tests

Lara reported that Woodside 5,6 received 13 completed surveys, 41% of total properties.

- 12 of those want high speed internet
- Century Link is the predominant current provider with 13 residences
- 10 people want to be able to work at home
- 4 people would like speeds as high as 100 MBPS
- 0 residents had speeds greater than 25 MBPS on speed tests

South Park Telephone Presentation and General Discussion

Dave Shipley, VP of South Park Telephone (SPT) introduced himself and provided background information on SPT and previous fiber projects in Park County. David mentioned the Silverheels Ranch subdivision DORA grant which totaled \$600,000 for placement of fiber. A grant application hearing for Burland Ranch will take place the end of March.

Question (Q) from attendee on whether the service costs on the SPT website are what we will pay. SPT indicated that prices for our neighborhoods will fall under the non-regulated prices so it will be competitive with what we are paying now.

Q from attendee on size of Silverheels Ranch subdivision. SPT answered about 140 dwellings which is about 1/5th the size of this project with the same topography.

Q from attendee on whether the fiber will run on IREA poles. SPT answered "yes" and that SPT will have to permit with IREA. SPT already has a letter of support from IREA.

Mike Brazell, Park County Commissioner, introduced himself and indicated his focus as Commissioner has been water and fiber broadband. Mike briefly discussed the higher internet speeds reported on the surveys are probably satellite. However, satellite typically comes with data caps and latency. These are eliminated with fiber optic technology. Satellite to fiber is like comparing apples to oranges. Bandwidth requirements increase 20% per year with technology advancements and in five years the current bandwidth won't be enough. 4K televisions require 25 MBPS of dedicated bandwidth to get a full picture without buffering, and an 8K television requires 50 MBPS of dedicated bandwidth.

Audience comment - AT&T just announced their future roadmap and they want to sell boxes for internet TV; they want to move away from satellite to internet provider television. AT&T is moving to sell boxes to people who have fiber.

Q from attendee - Has SPT done projects like AT&T does with First Net, which is the broadband network for public safety entities and first responders? SPT answered that they don't have the contract for First Net.

Q from attendee - Is there a possibility we would not qualify due to DORA fund availability right now? Attendee indicated that he spoke to someone from Century Link that doesn't think we will get the grant. SPT encouraged attendee to review the DORA grant map online. As a first step, SPT goes into an area and finds out what the coverage speeds are and if there are enough customers. After an Engineering and Feasibility Study is done, SPT goes in and does multiple speed tests. SPT will reach out and ask us to speed tests; we will submit speed test results to SPT with a time and date. This will help show eligibility for the grant.

Discussion that Mike Brazell and David Shipley have seats on the State Broadband Board. SPT provided background on the State broadband maps. Initially maps were developed with data from internet service providers (ISPs) that made it look like the ISPs were providing higher speeds than they actually were. Most people don't get the speeds they are paying for now. The Board knows that the maps don't agree with the speed tests. Thus, the reason speed tests are provided with grant applications. The Board no longer considers the ISP provided coverage maps as reality. Speed tests are critical to show underserved areas, otherwise the Board will have to rely on the maps.

Discussion on where the DORA Broadband Fund comes from. The Fund is based on a tax we pay on our phone bill which shows up as a \$2 charge. The State took some of this money for this Fund. The Fund will continue to go down in dollar amount, and now that people are aware of the Fund, we will see more applications. We need to apply sooner rather than later to increase chances of receiving grant money.

Q from attendee - How much will 50 MBPS cost? SPT answered that first we have to get through the Feasibility Study before we have a price structure. Price structuring will be partially based on the number of customers. In the regulated space it costs \$90 for 10 MBPS. We are in a non-regulated space so SPT can offer competitive pricing. Silverheels monthly pricing (140 residences)

ended up being approximately \$79 for 25 down/25 up. The more people who sign up early, the more prices will be discounted.

Q from attendee - Will there be a service center for local support? Will there be dispatch trucks? SPT currently has support and will probably put a support center in Bailey.

Q from attendee - How many people currently work for SPT - 3 field techs (supported by 68 employees)

Q from attendee on the timeline for this project. SPT has two years to complete the project from when the grant is awarded.

Bev discussed the purpose of the \$500 refundable commitment. The \$500 is to bring the fiber to your home. If you decide later after the project is complete that you want fiber, then SPT has to do a one-off installation and it could end up costing up to \$3,000 depending on how far you are from the fiber network. There is a huge benefit to joining early.

Comment from attendee - what Bev describes is a common for several utilities (e.g. gas line) otherwise it is too costly to add customers one at a time.

Mike Brazell commented that the actual cost to bring fiber to each individual home is between \$4,000-6000 without a grant or subsidies, which makes a grant necessary.

Q from attendee - Once fiber optic is brought to the home, is there additional cost? SPT answered that you can use your own router or rent one from SPT. If there are any wiring issues specific to your home, computer issues, or personal router issues, there may be additional costs to the customer. If your current infrastructure is in good order, there won't be additional costs.

Q from attendee - Century Link provides a modem/router and makes sure it works. Can we expect this from SPT? Yes. SPT answered that their modem is built into the electronics they install, so what SPT mounts you can plug into. You can buy a wireless router or SPT can supply for a cost.

Q from attendee - Does SPT have a residential tech support system? Yes, SPT has 24/7 tech support that customers can call.

Discussion that the Engineering and Feasibility Study is the next step; SPT presents the results of this study to our neighborhoods in mid-April. We have collected \$6,000 of the \$10,000 needed now. This study will provide a design on where the fiber will be laid and what the total cost of the project will be.

Q from attendee on a review of the timeline. Timeline: Collect \$10,000 for the Engineering and Feasibility study—> study occurs—> SPT presentation to residents on the study results—> We can apply for grant. It takes about 30 days to fill out the grant application; at this point SPT will ask us for speed tests. A screenshot of speed tests will need to be sent to SPT.

Q from attendee - Will the fiber follow current electric infrastructure? Yes. The fiber will be run on existing poles and be buried where electric lines are buried.

Q from attendee - Is there a process for closing out the needed \$10,000 for the Engineering and Feasibility Study? Yes. As soon as we collect \$10,000 from residents, SPT will conduct the Study. (They have actually started working on it.) We cannot apply for the grant without the Study.

Q from attendee - Is Staunton participating? Yes. Century Link is currently unable to provide Staunton the speeds they require to run the Visitor Center. Century Link has the State contract so they are currently in the process of removing them from a contract with Staunton so that Staunton can move forward with SPT.

Q from attendee on confidence and commented that he wants empirical evidence that SPT can do what they say they can do. SPT replied that if you want that, you will have to wait until Silverheels project is complete. That would result in missing this grant cycle.

Attendee comment that, based on his experience, because DORA works with SPT shows that the State trusts what SPT does. The State does not work with just any internet service provider. That provider has to prove itself.

Mike Brazell commented that he begged ISPs to come to the mountains for years; it's very difficult to get fiber in mountain communities because it is so costly. It requires a grant process. He divides ISPs into three tiers. AT&T and Verizon are tier I. It costs more to be serviced by them but it is done right. If problems occur, they have access to large amounts of capital. Tier II ISPs, like SPT have capacity to borrow \$5-10 million. They have fewer engineers but have history and have some resources to fall back on. Tier III providers are typically single ownership companies solving a local problem with borrowing capabilities up to 1 million, no engineer on the payroll, and run the risk of abandoned projects when problems occur. SPT is certified by the FCC and you can look up a summary on SPT outages online.

Q from attendee - Is SPT confident you will get the DORA grant? SPT can't promise anything.

Q from attendee - Are we at a disadvantage because of the current number of fiber projects in this area? SPT answered that the grants should show dispersal is geographically diverse, so we could be at a disadvantage. But SPT disagrees with this; if there is an eligible need somewhere for fiber, it should be brought there.

Q from attendee - We currently have \$6,000 towards the \$10,000. What happens if we don't get the \$10,000? SPT indicated that if we don't get to \$10,000 by end of March, the money is refunded. Or we can wait 6 months until the next grant cycle and hold the \$10,000 if we choose.

Q from attendee - Does anyone else on 285 have fiber? CDOT owns fiber down 285. This fiber is not accessible for our use and will not be sold for residential use.

Discussion on likely footprint of fiber. South Parker, Mt Evans Blvd, and S. Elk Creek Road will likely be the three arteries the fiber will enter the neighborhoods. The Engineering Study will show that SPT can serve a certain footprint and it will demonstrate who is in or outside that footprint. At this point, SPT will ask for a \$500 commitment which will pay for the fiber to run to your home if you are in the footprint.

Q from attendee - What happens to the \$500 if we are not awarded the grant? \$500 is refunded.

Q from attendee on permitting - SPT does all permitting. The bigger challenge is permitting with IREA. SPT has met with IREA CEO last few years and have primed them for this project.

Q from attendee - Two years ago IREA poles passed lifespan and some poles won't support the weight of the fiber. SPT has talked to IREA about this and there will be inevitable pole replacement with the build. SPT has considers this as part of their cost. Until we get the results of the Engineering and Feasibility study, we won't know how many poles need to be replaced. SPT is already in contact with IREA about this and hopes there is some cost-sharing for poles. SPT has been given authorization by IREA to access their database on poles which allows them to review poles in our area as part of the Study. Database access requires a good relationship and it is a positive sign that IREA has given this to SPT.

David Shipley announced that Mr. Orion Madsen from Elk Falls Ranch owns OEM pictures has an idea to put together video testimonials we can put into our grant application. Humanizing the grant application will help us have a standout application. There will possibly be one video to explain the results of the Study to residents and one video to submit with the grant. OEM is drone licensed.

SPT commented that Burland videoed their subdivision, for the grant application, and talked about the area, and how wireless can't get through foliage density.

SPT emphasized that the speed test data they will request from us is critical. SPT will send instructions on speed test results collection after the Feasibility Study. The faster we can get speed tests submitted to SPT when they request it, the better.

Discussion on the \$100 contribution to move the Feasibility study forward - There is now an online payment process. Bev reviewed the paper Form for check submission and the online version. The second Form she handed out is a mockup for the \$500 commitment to show residents what to expect. This \$500 will be due June 30th and can be paid in full or as two, \$250 payments. This is refundable if don't get grant. Some folks have already submitted their \$500 to commit. Again, the \$500 will pay for the fiber to be run to your residence if we are awarded the grant and is fully refundable if we do not receive the grant.

Q from attendee - What amount of commitment do we need? We need 50% commitment by June 30th; we need 300 homes to commit. 50-60-70% commitment get a tiered discount that increases the more people sign up. This discount will be in effect for three or five years, depending on which contract length you choose.

Discussion on size of fiber pipes - there will be a 10 GB pipe by end of April for Bailey and Fairplay.

Q from attendee - What is the service level agreement? Is that going to be in the terms? SPT will put that in the terms.

Bev pointed to the timeline handout, which is also available on our website 285broadband.com under the Resources tab.

DORA fund likes to see how this grant will benefit the community (e.g., churches, HOAs, education, home businesses) A Jeffco letter of support from the school district to say it will benefit the children in these neighborhoods would be helpful.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.