

Greenway Commission

January 13, 2011



Members present:

Marc Hunt, Chair
Jim Grode, Vice Chair
Stephen Jones
Glen Locascio
Stephanie Pankiewicz
Sue Barlow

Staff present:

Megan Shepherd, Special Projects Coordinator
Al Kopf, Planning & Development Superintendent
David Foster, Public Works
Blake Esselstyn, Planning Department
Nathan Pennington, Planning Department
Barb Mee, Transportation Department

Guests present:

Preston Kendall, Ingles Market Inc.

Marc called the meeting to order at 3:33 p.m.

1. Approval of December minutes

Stephen motioned to approve the December minutes, Sue seconded, all approved and the motion passed unanimously.

2. Cooper Boulevard Street Closure

David Foster with Public Works described the location of the Cooper Boulevard proposed street closure. He reported that no internal departments or utilities have responded with concerns or easement issues.

Jim asked for clarification about the former mobile home park. Currently, Ingles Market owns the property surrounding this area and none of the structures remain. Stephen asked why the closure has been requested. Nathan Pennington from Planning presented the site plan for the new Ingles Market which necessitates that this street be closed.

Marc asked if bicycle/pedestrian facilities will be integrated into the site plan. Preston Kendall with Ingles Market presented a map, explaining there will be 6 ft wide sidewalks along Smokey Park Highway with pedestrian walks crossing the streets and lining the front of the building. Bicycle racks are required and will be installed. There will also be internal circulation sidewalks. There's an existing dirt path in the rear of the building that

will remain, at the request of the neighborhood. It will be improved and maintained as part of a fifty foot landscape buffer. There are no plans for bicycle lanes.

Marc asked Planning staff for bike lane guidelines or standards in projects of this size. Blake explained that this is private property area and doesn't include any new public road construction, as the Enka Village development did. The City has bike lane standards in public road construction but not on private land.

Stephen asked if Ingles Market is considering adding bike lanes in their development. Blake said he was unaware of any instance in the city where that has occurred on private development. Preston Kendall explained that during meetings with the public a school across the street requested they add internal sidewalks for student pedestrian safety. They have agreed to this.

Commission members discussed if a future standard for bike lanes in private developments should exist.

Marc suggested that the Commission recommend the developers improve the path behind the building to increase non-motorized transportation options. Nathan explained that this could lead to ADA compliance complications and recommended staff take the time to consider the feasibility of this.

Stephen motioned to recommend that City staff research the feasibility of a permanent, multi-use, maintained trail connecting the neighborhood to the new Ingles Market development, and for the Planning & Zoning Commission and City Council to consider that research in their approval of the street closure and zoning modifications. Jim seconded. All were in favor, and the motion passed unanimously.

3. Greenway Ranking Analysis Update

Jim reported that he, Stephen and Glen met to discuss the greenways ranking analysis. They determined it was worthwhile to update this ranking system to use as a demonstration of our planning and prioritization efforts as we attempt to attract funding. They intend on looking at the original ranking criteria and determining if they are sufficient. Their goal is to return to the next meeting with a recommendation for how to proceed. However, they felt it does not make sense to proceed before the Buncombe County greenway plan and Wilma Dykeman Riverway River Arts District project (the 2.2 mile section that Stephanie's working on) have made some progress. The subcommittee recommended coordinating with these processes and proceeding after their findings have been finalized.

Glen also recommended working with staff to look at funding and budget for these greenways. Stephanie suggested building in a line item for maintenance when estimating costs.

4. Waller/Hominy Creek Project Update

Marc reported that the City signed a contract to acquire the property in October. That transaction should close within the next two weeks. Then, there will be a ten day upset bid period where the public can enter a bid at least 5% higher, which could lead to a bidding challenge. City Council is directing city staff to pursue this sale aggressively.

Stephanie asked if eminent domain is a possibility if a bidding challenge did occur. Jim thought this might lead to complicated bidding processes and requirements.

5. Greenway Commission 2010 Annual Report

Stephanie motioned to approve the 2010 annual report, Sue seconded, all were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

6. Staff Updates

Blake reported that Harris Teeter has announced its intent to develop a store on Merrimon Ave. There would be pedestrian connections on three sides. They will also attempt to preserve a historical wall on Holland St. The bike parking requirement is 5%. There will also be some traffic changes including a signal and possible new lane on Broad Street. Stephen asked if bike lanes will be added if roads are widened. Barb said that the transportation plan calls for Chestnut to have lane improvements (depending on funding) independent of this project. Merrimon is not a street in the plan since the road is so narrow. The Harris Teeter project doesn't include a street closure so it won't come to the Greenway Commission but it will come through staff. It is too small to go to P&Z or City Council.

Al reported that staff met last week to discuss the Tiger II grant process about the scope of work and fund allocation for Clingman and Town Branch greenways and possibly to supplement the Wilma Dykeman plan or Depot Street pedestrian area (though that is not primary). The Commission would like to invite Jeff Staudinger, who is coordinating the grant for the City, to speak at some point.

Seth reported the department is starting the bid approval process for Reed Creek Greenway Phase II and would like to get started in March/April.

7. Asheville Parks & Greenways Foundation Update

No news to report.

8. Buncombe County Greenway Update

No news to report.

9. Asheville Bike & Pedestrian Task Force Update

No news to report.

10. Other Business

Sue stated that the Community Relations subcommittee's mission is public awareness and outreach. She would like to develop a schedule for community outreach at least once a month. She has contacted the Board of Realtors and will be presenting to them shortly. She will also meet with a member of the Board of Directors on the magnet schools in West Asheville to promote outreach among students and families. Local business associations might also be amenable to outreach. Stephanie volunteered to help with outreach as she has many contacts from her work with the Wilma Dykeman Riverway plan.

Sat Jan 22 at AB Tech Stephanie's Riverway group will have a meeting for public input. There'll be a 30 day public input period. Stephen suggested viewing the presentation at the next meeting and gathering public comments from the Commission.

Marc reminded all to complete the survey AI sent around.

11. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 4:41 p.m.