

# Greenway Commission

## May 12, 2011



### Members present:

Marc Hunt, Chair  
Jim Grode, Vice Chair  
Marcia Bromberg  
Sue Barlow  
Stephanie Pankiewicz  
Glen Locascio

### Staff present:

Megan Shepherd, Special Projects Coordinator  
Seth Hendler-Voss, Landscape Architect  
Al Kopf, Planning Superintendent  
Blake Esselstyn, Planning Department

### Guests present:

Jim called the meeting to order at 3:40 p.m.

### 1. Approval of April Minutes

Stephanie motioned to approve the April minutes, Sue seconded, all approved and the motion passed unanimously.

### 2. Election of New Chair & Vice Chair

Sue motioned for Jim to serve as Chair. Marc seconded. All were in favor, and the motion passed unanimously.

Marc motioned for Marcia to serve as Vice Chair. Sue seconded, all were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

### 3. Master Plan Update Process

Al presented the Master Plan Update process developed with Roderick. He explained that the Master Plan will likely be updated at the next accreditation. (All pieces will be updated, not just the greenways component.) In the interim, a process has been developed to specifically update the greenways project list. There are three categories of greenway projects:

1. potential greenway projects (not assessed, not in Master Plan)
2. greenway projects in the master plan but not actively planned
3. planned greenway projects assigned a priority number

The first step in the process toward making these changes is to get public input from a public meeting. The Greenway Commission would facilitate this. Then, a subcommittee of the Commission would discuss the public comments and rank them according to the established criteria. That subcommittee would bring the recommendations back to the Greenway Commission, and then to the Recreation Advisory Board CIP sub-committee, who looks at allocating resources for the whole department.

Being in the CIP priority list would make a greenway project more attractive for resources and potential grants. Marc commented that when a greenway project is included on the Master Plan it gives it some weight and brings it to the attention of other departments. He worried that potential projects might be overlooked if they aren't on the Master Plan. Smith Mill Creek is a good example of a greenway corridor not included on the Master Plan but of high potential. He felt like CIP was more about short-term funding, which isn't the same as the Master Plan's long-term priorities. Marcia added that if new funding sources become available, either internally or externally, it would be a hindrance for a project not to be on the Master Plan.

Marcia added that it is a crucial time because Buncombe County is conducting their Master Plan process and it would be a shame to miss the opportunity to include some of these important corridors.

Jim asked how the CIP priority list and Master Plan differ, and if there is any way for projects on the CIP priority list to have the same status and importance on those of the Master Plan. Al said that internally, yes, the CIP priority list can serve a similar function, but externally it might not work that way. Marc felt that if a greenway project came forward that wasn't on the Master Plan, even if it was on the CIP, some City Council members would have a problem with that.

Marcia said that it's not impossible, but might be difficult and unlikely, for the County to add corridors on its plan that aren't on the City plans. Glen agreed that amending the plan was necessary and recalled amendments being made in the past. Marcia suggested an auxiliary list of projects (like an addendum to the Master Plan) that are understood not to be on the budget plan. The public would be included in that process. Glen emphasized that we needed something more than short-term funding for many greenway projects.

Marc also felt that in addition to including new important segments, other parts of the Master Plan might need to be changed or edited and that should happen at the same time. Marc noted that when the Commission reviewed the plan previously, little attention was given by planners to the River District (because the area was covered by Wilma Dykeman Plan), which the Greenways Commission objected to at the time. But the issue never went to Council.

Marc motioned that because the Buncombe County Master Plan will be created over the next 18 months, and because citizens have identified potential new greenway segments, and because the Greenway Commission's previous amendment to the Plan are still pending, the Greenway Commission strongly recommends reviewing and amending as

needed the Asheville Parks, Recreation, Cultural Arts & Greenways Master Plan by October 31 for City Council review. Marcia seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Stephanie asked if this motion would negate the Master Plan Update Process. Al felt like the process is fairly standard and is still a logical way to approach it, with some changes. A subcommittee would still be recommended. The Commission had previously developed a process for public submissions for new requests. Al said that the Department does have a process and form for suggested partnerships, projects, and ideas and something similar could be used.

#### **4. Community Outreach Committee Report**

Sue reported that Stephen, Marcia and she attended a meeting on April 26 to talk about moving the Community Outreach Committee forward. They decided that they will keep working on the presentation, tailoring it to different audiences. The Committee wants to have greater communication with the County. As part of this, the Committee met with Ann Babcock on the County Greenway Commission on May 5 and determined that the County's Master Plan is the current priority. The Committee might start doing some tourism events or tours of completed & potential greenways. Sue is trying to get a table at the Realtors Expo all-day on May 19 at Crowne Plaza.

Jim said that Erica Palmer, organizer at WNC Alliance, contacted him regarding ABIPA, a local organization to improve health outcomes for African Americans. Part of that might involve a partnership regarding active health on greenways. Marcia said ABIPA does a radio program and it might be good to interview a Commissioner, too.

Marc announced that Strive Not To Drive week is approaching. Part of that involves a Mayor's bike ride through Asheville with a speech about alternative transportation. Marc will be part of that bike ride, on Wednesday from 4-6pm.

#### **5. Staff Updates: Planning Department**

Blake reported that the Enka project has submitted Phase I (bridge & roads). The comments the Greenway Commission previous made will be reiterated.

Also, Blake noted that some of the multifamily planning projects that previously lost interest are starting to come back, as rentals or condos.

He said that federal funding is still unclear but the Sustainable Communities Initiative, Tiger II, and similar grants are still moving forward.

Also, the Planning Department is working with CNT in Chicago (Center for Neighborhood Technology) who is developing a model that indicates that location of housing is crucial to affordability (largely due to transit costs).

## **6. Staff Updates: PRCA Department**

Seth reported that we'll break ground on Reid Creek Phase II in the next week or two.

## **7. Asheville Parks & Greenways Foundation Update**

Glen reported that the Foundation did not meet last month.

## **8. Buncombe County Greenway Update**

Marcia reported that the kickoff for the County Master Plan will be held June 10 from 2-4pm at the Arboretum. Marcia and Al attended a meeting to discuss County Master Plan consultants. The County Greenway Commission is developing a brochure.

## **9. Asheville Bike and Pedestrian Task Force Update**

Jim reported that Doug "Brother Hug" Barlow was scheduled to speak at the latest meeting. Marcia said there were several clean-up days for the Hominy Creek Greenway area that some members attended. Jim noted that there are still native plants in the corridor.

## **10. Other Business**

Stephanie reported that she contacted Esther and Susan Fisher regarding the placeholder bill and that there's a possibility for the Commission to speak with a larger group (Brownie, Holly, etc). The Commission decided to speak to Esther first.

Meeting adjourned at 4:42 p.m.