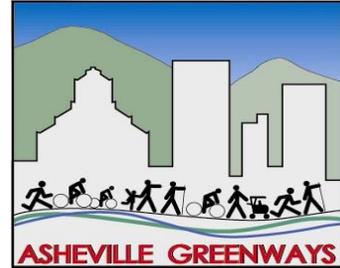


Greenway Commission

December 9, 2010



Members present:

Marc Hunt, Chair
Marcia Bromberg, Vice Chair
Stephen Jones
Glen Locascio
Susan Barlow
Jim Grode

Staff present:

Megan Shepherd, Special Projects Coordinator
Al Kopf, Planning & Development Superintendent
Blake Esselstyn, Planning Department
Dan Baechtold, Transportation Department

Guests present:

None

Marc called the meeting to order at 3:33 pm.

1. Approval of November minutes

Marcia asked for a clarification to be made in the November minutes regarding the Montford Commons Street Closure Project. Pending changes, Marcia motioned to approve, Stephen seconded, all approved and the motion passed unanimously.

2. Update to Greenway Scoring Analysis

Marc and Marcia led a discussion of possible revisions to the greenway scoring analysis and how it might be revisited along with revisions to the Parks, Recreation, Cultural Arts & Greenways Master Plan.

Glen asked about the Master Plan level of service analysis, particularly how north and south Asheville were designated as underserved. He suggested including a similar level of service analysis for this ranking system. He also felt the greenway corridors/systems themselves could be refined and expanded to make them clearer. Al agreed that there is a lack of greenway development in the north and south of Asheville due to restraints.

Blake stated that in some cases, what were being called greenways when this analysis was created are now considered transportation corridors for bike/pedestrians, but are no longer designated as greenways. Al said he could coordinate with Public Works to make sure this is clarified. Marcia felt taking everything on the list and updating it to reflect the

current situation would be a good starting point. Al agreed and said he would update the list.

Al asked if, once staff performs its update, the Greenway Commission will look at the analysis during a regular meeting or as part of a subcommittee. Marcia said first an updated list should come before the Commission, at which time the Commission will determine if a subcommittee is needed.

Jim asked what the ultimate goal of this update and analysis is. Marcia felt it was to see if the goals of the Master Plan still match the needs of greenways in the community, and then to determine if we need to seek community input and consider revisions to the Master Plan. Marc asked how members felt about the need for an update. Stephen said it would need to be done efficiently and with a clear goal in mind to justify staff and Commission time. Glen felt there was a benefit to updating the list. Sue liked that it is a quantitative way of looking at what we've got. Stephen, Jim, Glen and Susan expressed interest in volunteering for this subcommittee. Marcia said once the Commission gets the updated list from staff, they might decide that is sufficient and there is no need for updates or changes. Jim agreed to spearhead this, when/if it is determined there's a need to update it.

3. Staff Updates

Blake reported that the Sustainable Communities Initiative grant money has further been designated. The bulk of money is coming from DOT and much will be designated for transportation; however, this grant may also provide resources for planning and design for greenways. Jeff Staudinger with Community Development would like to meet with the Commission regarding the designation of funds. Al said there will be about \$430,000 available toward greenways with a \$60,000 match from City (which will be in-kind). These funds cannot be used for construction or land acquisition. Al said we still need more funding to acquire land necessary for the planning and design of these greenways.

Al reported that City Council passed the resolution supporting the Buncombe County Master Plan. Marcia added that Buncombe County got a \$50,000 grant and is still pursuing more grant opportunities.

Regarding Reed Creek Greenway, the bid has been put out and re-advertised. Now staff is evaluating bids. The good news is the bids are priced very reasonably.

4. Asheville Parks & Greenways Foundation Update

Glen reported that the Foundation held a social in November that took the place of the November and December meetings. The Foundation is not actively recruiting for a new Executive Director.

5. Nominating Committee Update

Marcia announced the nominations are for Marc to return as Chair and Jim to assume the role of Vice Chair. There were no other nominations from the floor. Marcia motioned, Stephen seconded, and all agreed. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Buncombe County Greenway Update

Marcia reported that Stephanie gave a wonderful presentation regarding the Wilma Dykeman Riverway River Arts District project. There will be a meeting on January 22 to gather public input.

At the request of an unnamed County Commissioner, the Buncombe County Greenway Commission passed a resolution asking for County Commissioners to agree to consider the concept of a dedicated stream of revenue for greenways.

Marc clarified that greenways within Asheville will also be part of the overall county greenway system and this could include sharing of resources and funding. The Waller Tract is a model for this.

There will be a foundation formed to address social services, healthy living, parks & recreation, though there are few details determined at this point.

7. Asheville Bike and Pedestrian Task Force Update

The Bike & Pedestrian Task Force worked on list of accomplishments over past year and list of goals for 2011.

8. Other Business

December 15 is the deadline to close for the Waller Tract. This date may be pushed back due to some complications.

Megan provided an update on the greenway brochure production. They will be finished by the January or February Commission meeting.

9. State and Federal Funding Sources for Greenways

Dan introduced himself and stated that for six years he served as the MPO coordinator and currently does transportation planning for the City and riverway area. He presented various options for state and federal funding sources for greenways:

1. The NCDOT Statewide Enhancements Call. In the past, every two years DOT would use some of their federal enhancement dollars to put out a call for applications. Each of the 14 highway divisions in the state was allotted some money, and a committee selected the winner for each division. Additionally in this Call, a portion of the pot of funds was reserved for statewide competition. The Clingman Ave streetscape project, sidewalk on New Haw Creek Road, and Pack Square Park improvements funding came from this

grant. However, due to the challenging economy the State hasn't put out a "call" in some time and the future of these funds are uncertain.

2. NCDOT Bicycle Program Enhancement Funds. This is not the same as the Enhancement Call grants. These are determined via request from municipality or MPO priority list. So this is different than getting a grant; it is a partnership project. Parts of the Reed Creek Greenway and Amboy Road-Hominy Creek connector are examples of projects in this funding category. This funding is ongoing, unlike the "call" grants.

3. NCDOT Division 13 Funds. This is a pot of funds used for sidewalks and small projects. These are sometimes called "Division Enhancements Funds." These have been used for the Patton Ave sidewalk project and Beaverdam Road sidewalk project.

4. STP-DA. The MPO manages and programs this funding source, though the State has designated funds for the past few years. Though these funds are for urban areas, the MPO might decide to program it outside of the urban area. This is approximately \$3 million/year, which would cover the urbanized areas of Asheville, Hendersonville, Waynesville, and others. The City submitted a list of needs to the MPO for ARRA funds, and that led to the recent bike lane projects and sidewalk projects. They decided to program the next 3 years for STP-DA funding, which include sidewalk on Hendersonville Rd and sidewalk on new Leicester Highway. This funding could also be used for right-of-way design. There is, however, a 20% match required. Off-road greenway trails would also be eligible for this.

Marcia expressed her thanks to staff for explaining this complex system.

The meeting adjourned at 4:47 p.m.